In the Sanctuary

BY

A. VAN DER NAILLEN

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SEQUEL TO
ON THE HEIGHTS OF HIMALAY

BY
A. VAN DER NAILLEN

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INTRODUCTION.

THE publication, at this late date, of a sequel to "On the Heights of Himalay," may strike our readers as being somewhat out of chronological consistency. The fact is that it has been unexpectedly delayed by the author's discovery of the existence of an order of occultists higher than that described in "On the Heights of Himalay." It was his intention to have issued a sequel two years ago, but his investigations, made in the direction of this mysterious order, brought to his knowledge so many momentous facts in connection with the origin of religious observances and their significations, that the faithful exposition of them necessarily consumed much time. Such being the case, we deem it advisable to present in a few paragraphs a faint outline of the contents of the previous volume, with the twofold object of refreshing the memory of those of our readers who perused the former work, and of rendering the present one more intelligible to those who have not.

It will suffice to state that Prince Arthur de Silvereau, the hero of "On the Heights of Himalay," had been in his youth a captain in the body-guard of the King of France. His position conferred on him many privileges, among which was that of

being present at the Court family entertainments. Thus was he thrown in contact not only with the King, but also with the royal princes and princesses. Among the latter was the princess Dolora, who, although not physically beautiful, as the fashionable world would judge, was possessed of that harmony of features and of that distinguished and lovely mien which are the appanage of a pure and lovely soul.

Prince Arthur, on the other hand, was a handsome young cavalier, the beauty of whose aristocratic features was further enhanced by the splendid uniform worn by the officers of the King's body-guard. He was, moreover, more poet than soldier, more of a dreamer than of a warrior, and as is generally the case when two young beings possessed of exalted feelings are brought together, their hearts soon learn to beat in unison, and mutual love is the result. There was no exception in the case of Princess Dolora and Prince Arthur. They loved each other with that Platonic, spiritualized love whose vibrations pure and holy are carried on angels' wings. But their chaste love was destined to remain unrewarded. The King of a neighboring nation sued for the hand of Princess Dolora, and his suit was granted.

When it became known that such decision had been made by the French monarch, the young couple gave way to intense grief. But it is the fate of those occupying high

station that their affections are disregarded, and the most sacred and legitimate feelings of the heart are sacrificed to what monarchs are pleased to name "the welfare of nations."

Prince Arthur soon after resigned his commission, asked and obtained a letter of introduction from the King to the Pope, and, armed with this missive, proceeded forthwith to Rome. On his arrival in that city he obtained audience of His Holiness, who thereat, in accordance with his wish, assigned Prince Arthur to the very strict order of Trappist Friars, in an Italian cloister. He was soon admitted to the priesthood, and ten years later we find him in Simla, India, a Roman Catholic Bishop in charge of all the missions of that country. In the volume referred to we narrated the life of Bishop Angelo in India, how he became interested, by daily contact with mystics, in the occult performances of the high-priests, and how, subsequently, he was led in a mysterious way to Thibet, where he was initiated into the order of the Himalayan Brotherhood. Having passed through the ordeals and ceremonies of the three degrees of the order, he finally was ordained a Master, and thus became an Adept.

Soon afterwards he was called to Europe by the Pope, who invested him with the dignity of Archbishop of Simla, with residence in the City of Liège, in Belgium.

With this preliminary sketch of our hero's experiences down to this period of his life, we will now proceed with the narration of his future career.

CHAPTER I.

BEFORE entering on his military career, the Prince had received from the foremost university of France the degree of Doctor of Science and Philosophy, and while in the army had zealously pursued his studies. These he continued more earnestly than ever, now that he was stationed in Liège with merely the duties of Honorary Archbishop, for in them lay an enigma the solution of which would be of incalculable benefit to the human race, and to that solution he had devoted his life with all the earnestness of an enthusiast.

As a thorough scientist and true philosopher, he knew that all manifestations of power, whether occult or visible, are the result of some natural force, either known or yet unrevealed. Hence he concentrated his power on the discovery of the laws underlying the various phenomena he had witnessed not only in India, but during his residence in Belgium. Many times, indeed, in their astral bodies, had the Masters visited him from far-off Himalay, and vouchsafed to him much valuable instruction. Thus year after year he spent in the study of the principles, to the occult operations of which could be traced the marvels he had witnessed, and many of which he himself could now produce at will.

So engrossed was he in his researches that he was rarely seen in the street of Liège, and seldom, indeed, outside the walls of the palace, except on sacred or festal days when it became his duty to celebrate the Mass. On such occasions his carriage, drawn by four milk-white steeds, was driven in state to the cathedral, a courier preceding him and announcing with note of trumpet the advent of the Prince and Prelate; and as he passed, all heads were bowed and all knees were bent in obeisance. From his equipage to the door of the cathedral he passed over costly carpets of bright purple hue, while vicars upheld his silken robes, and thence by a train of priests in full sacerdotal vestments he was conducted to the grand altar, where Mass was solemnized with all the pomp and ceremonial of the Catholic ritual. Far, however, was the heart of the Archbishop from all such vain display; but he must perform his duties as prescribed by the canons of the church.

One evening, while secluded in his studio and given over to deep reflection, Angelo (this was the name given to the Archbishop) was asking himself why it was that, almost in proportion as his studies progressed, in degree as his investigations in science seemed to approach nearer to a solution of the mystic enigma by revealing the natural law upon which might rest the many occult phenomena he had witnessed—why it was that in the same degree the visits of the

Hindoo Masters became more rare, and their influence less distinctly felt. "Still," he said to himself, "I feel in the very depths of my being that I have given them no offense; that my line of investigation even meets with the approval of the Holy Ones. Why is it that the bright radiance which so often surrounded me and filled my studio, when at prayer asking for aid from above, has gradually been replaced by one more brilliant, though seemingly more attenuated, as if composed of a more refined, more rarefied aura, tinged with golden hue? Have my Hindoo Masters deserted me?"

No sooner had Archbishop Angelo formulated this mental question than the room was gradually filled with the bright effulgence of old, and in its midst, as the sun from which it emanated, appeared his old Hindoo Master.

In solemn words and with a tinge of sadness, he said:

"To answer my brother's inquiry have I come. As he has truly observed, the white and brilliant light, or the aura characteristic of the Brethren of Thibet to which our brother belongs, has gradually been replaced by one more attenuated, though brighter and with golden radiance, characterizing the aura of the European branch of the order of the sacred Magi. For years in the past, attention has been drawn to our order through discoveries made by European travelers, especially by Englishmen, of

many sacred writings deposited in Buddhist Temples, but neglected even by the Buddhists themselves. The philosophy set forth in these sacred writings was so lofty, as well as so spiritualizing in its tendency, that a study of them was now begun, a zealous and earnest study, with the result that many of the best and most learned men of Europe turned their eyes toward the Orient, hoping to find there an antidote to the ever-increasing evils of materialism, to the belief that matter alone is supreme and has in itself all the potentialities of existence and of final destiny.

"Hence Europeans of note were received into our orders, and there taught many occult laws endowing them with the gifts that pertain to the seer, with the faculty of traveling in their astral bodies, with the power of commanding the atoms of matter to obey their will when duly strengthened by practice and endowed with various occult powers. The manifestations of these powers my brother has personally witnessed in Simla and in the monastery of Thibet, where he took the three degrees.

"Several of the Europeans my brother has seen, and a few he has recognized in the monastery. They were more than satisfied; they were amazed at the powers they witnessed to their hearts' content, and which gradually became developed in themselves. At first they thought of nothing else than to prepare to become worthy to receive these

powers, to make use of them for the benefit of their European brethren, many of whom and those the brightest minds of all—were struggling in the darkest meshes of materialism.

"They started the European propaganda with all the zeal of which their minds were capable. Many were those who listened to the new revelation, many and bright were the eyes that were turned toward the Orient for light, and many were they whose hearts throbbed within them, hoping that here, in Thibet, the Mecca of the human soul had at length been discovered.

"Gradually, however, the European initiates of our order found themselves confronted with the questionings of the scientist and the philosopher. They wanted proofs. The few manifestations of occult power which it was lawful for our initiates to exhibit, although astonishing to those who witnessed them, were disbelieved by those to whom they were narrated, and after some time much ridicule was attached to the word Occultism.

"As our initiates knew from personal experience that the occult powers were true; that in man lay dormant forces of which we could as yet form no adequate conception; and they also knew that on the belief in the reality of these occult powers rested, in large measure, the hope of salvation for humanity through the downfall of materialism and the belief in a Supreme Being, our initiates,

all men of intellect and, for the most part, of scientific attainments, worked with untiring zeal to find a corelation in science with all these manifestations of occult powers.

"When my brother was admitted into our order in Thibet he found in our monastery complete scientific laboratories, established there by European initiates. As my brother observed, these laboratories were of great service, and he was pleased, and, perhaps, not a little surprised, to find that our occult powers were based on science, and, in some instances, were capable of scientific demonstration.

"And now it has come to pass that the old Masters of Thibet, whose powers were obtained by a life-long discipline, by a continuous strengthening of the will, and complete subjugation of self, can no longer follow our European brethren in their scientific studies. The latter also found it tiresome, and not infrequently (as in times of planetary disturbance, when the atmosphere was filled with destructive vibrations) even dangerous, to pass eastward in their astral bodies and continue to prosecute in India their studies of Scientific Occultism.

"Finally a council was summoned in Thibet, and it was then determined, in all harmony, in all good will and brotherly love, that the European initiates of Thibet should join the European branch, the higher branch of the order, each one having first obtained the consent of the Supreme Master.

"The influence of this higher branch, my brother, thou hast gradually drawn upon thyself, thy studies being in perfect harmony with their investigations of Scientific Occultism; and the attenuated or rarefied aura with golden radiations, so often perceived by my brother, is the one pertaining to the European members of our brotherhood, to those selected to enter the one supreme order of earth, unknown as yet to thee, and to wear the mantle of the holiest office that can be bestowed on man. Soon wilt thou, my brother, own allegiance to that sacred order, and to-day have I come to say that ere long thou shalt obey the Supreme Master of the European Brotherhood, that from this day the Master of Thibet doth release thee from all fealty to the Himalayan Brotherhood. Only thou art asked to visit the monastery once a year, on the anniversary of thy initiation, to renew the ties of brotherhood in Parabrahm; for well art thou aware that the Masters love thee and fain would have thee visit them at intervals. Farewell, dear brother, farewell! The best wishes and the blessing of the Masters follow thee."

From those who have received the initiation into the third degree, it is said that all the emotions of our common humanity have forever departed. Be this as it may, the voice of the Himalayan Master quivered as he bade farewell to Angelo, while the heart of the Archbishop swelled within

him, and a sob was smothered in his breast. Long did Angelo remain absorbed in deep and solemn thought, mentally reviewing his career from the moment when, guided by unseen influences, he journeyed from Simla to the very door of the monastery at Thibet, where, amid the fastnesses of Himalay, he was initiated into the three degrees of occultism. Well did he remember the laboratories through which he passed, and his pleasure and astonishment at the manifold apparatus they contained. It also came to his memory that the Masters he found studying in those laboratories were all of them Europeans.

And now he comprehended why it was that there must be a separation between the Hindoo and European branches of the order, since their methods of study and investigation were directly opposed to each other. To state the conditions more precisely, the former was content to exercise the occult powers, the secret of which was transmitted to them by the succession of Masters, holding these powers as sacred and inviolable; hence they were non-progressive. The latter did not rest satisfied merely with the exercise of these powers; but, aware of the unbounded possibilities of man, they were wont to investigate them, to try to discover the laws upon which they were based, calling to their aid the discoveries in every branch of science known to man, especially those of physiology and psychology. Thus

had their progress been most remarkable. All this Angelo thoroughly understood.

While still absorbed in meditation, the well-known silvery ring of the astral bells was heard in his room directly overhead. Listening to their sweet tones, he was utterly amazed to find them gradually resolving themselves into words, which presently conveyed to him the following message:

"Proceed to London, and there thou wilt be guided to thy destination. One of the European Masters desires to converse with thee."

The message indicated that its summons should be obeyed without delay; that new and important revelations in occult science were to be made to him; and, moreover, that this was the first step toward affiliation with the European branch of the brotherhood. Placing, therefore, the affairs of the archdiocese in order, he set forth on his journey to England with perfect confidence that, during his absence, all would be well.

Not without emotion, however, did Angelo undertake this journey. The same train of thought which had filled his soul when, mounting his horse at Simla, he had set his face toward Himalay, guided day by day by an unseen but none the less palpable occult influence to the very door of the monastery where dwelt the Holy Masters—by the same thought and by a similar influence was he now possessed, and yet by an influence dif-

fering in degree, a more lofty one, a more refined one, giving buoyancy to his spirit, not as of earthly joy, but as of a blissful emanation from above. Scientific occultism—the discovery of the laws underlying occult phenomena—this had been the dream of his life since his initiation, and to this end his studies had been constantly directed. The difficulties he had met with were almost insurmountable, but he had already discovered enough to confirm in him the belief that his life's ambition was attainable, and, he hoped, soon to be attained. Various specialists in science would pursue their studies in parallel lines, and perhaps he was already on the way to meet them, to combine with theirs his own investigations.

CHAPTER II.

ARRIVING in London, Angelo was accosted at the railroad station by a young gentleman who bade him enter a carriage, the panels of which bore a coat of arms, the door being opened by a liveried valet. As the vehicle rolled away in its short journey over the hard pavements of the city, neither of the occupants spoke, each one being seemingly intent on making a spiritual diagnosis of his companion. The Archbishop was much pleased with the lofty and harmonious influences proceeding from the young English gentleman, while the latter concluded that the Prelate would be a most suitable companion for his master.

Presently the carriage passed under a stone archway, the entrance to a stately mansion situated in one of the older quarters of London. Alighting, Angelo found himself at the foot of one of those stairways seen only in the more ancient palaces of the metropolis. Invited to ascend, the young Englishman leading the way, he was ushered into a large drawing-room, in which was the rarest of antique furniture in blue and gold. A moment later the side door opened, and he found himself in the presence of a man of striking and venerable aspect, with

long, flowing beard, and locks of silvery whiteness—a veritable patriarch of his order.

"Welcome to this palace, most welcome," he said, with gentle and slightly quivering voice. "My age is my only apology for not having met your Grace at the station. Your message must have partly informed you of the motive that summoned you hither. Ralph, my pupil"—indicating the young gentleman—"will show you the room set apart for your use. In half an hour dinner will be served."

Following his guide, Angelo was conducted to apartments fit to be occupied by a king. His toilet was of the simplest—for he was dressed in civilian garb—and, this completed, the sound of a gong was heard, followed by a gentle knock at the outside door of the suite of apartments, which was opened by Ralph, who proceeded to lead the way to the dining-room. Two covers only were laid. The service was of silver and gold, each article being engraved with the coat of arms pertaining to the host. It was then observed by Angelo that, in the outer world, his host bore the same rank in the nobility to which he belonged himself.

The servants being present, the conversation ran upon the incidents of the journey, the crossing of the channel, and the rough passage.

The dinner ended, Angelo was invited by his host to visit the art gallery of the pal-

ace and the room devoted to scientific purposes; then followed a brief interval of repose, the hour of nine having been appointed for Ralph to conduct him to the ante-room of the Sanctuary, when would be revealed the object of his summons to England.

Fain would Angelo have lingered in the art gallery, where priceless treasures were displayed, paintings whose values none could estimate. What, however, more than all else, attracted his attention, were the family portraits, some of them antedating the period of the Crusades. He admired especially four portraits of the Knights of Malta, of almost gigantic stature, each clad in coat of mail, with helmet inlaid with gold or silver, and brandishing aloft the huge two-handed sword which none but him could wield, while in their features were portrayed a strength of will, a decision of character, that knew not how to yield. And yet, softer tones were expressed, denoting all the depths of feeling, the capability of those higher and holier emotions which marked the heroes of this age of chivalry.

While intently gazing on these magnificent specimens of manhood, Angelo thus mused within himself: "Noble souls were hidden under these stern and warlike exteriors. Yes, they were warriors; but they fought against wrongs, and only against men when they would not right those wrongs. In the medieval ages, when every

knight was a law unto himself, a self-constituted monarch upon his own estates, constantly making war on his feebler neighbors in order to enlarge those estates by the capture of lands and vassals, thus enhancing his power to commit further outrages—then did these Knights of Malta, each a scion of the highest noblesse, and many of them exceedingly rich, travel alone on horseback, attended only by a single herald, over the terrorized regions. By them all serious charges were investigated, all wrongs redressed, no matter how powerful those to whom they were brought home, for to their aid could be summoned, if need be, the entire order of Knights, with all the weight of their influence and wealth. Where now are the warrior-priests (for all were duly ordained) who devoted their lives to the noble purpose of meting out justice to the lowly, and relieving those oppressed by the wealthy and high-stationed?"

With a sigh the Archbishop followed his attendant to the spacious cabinet-room of science, where the silver chimes of the clock reminded him that the time was approaching when his host would await him in the Sanctuary. He now asked to be reconducted to his room to prepare to enter worthily the sacred chamber of the palace.

"The third door to the right gives entrance to the ante-room of the Sanctuary," replied Ralph, as with low obeisance he retired.

In the apartment leading to the ante-room was a prayer-desk at which the Archbishop knelt as he addressed to the throne of Grace the most fervent prayer that human soul could utter. "O Infinite Father, once more Thy humble servant follows the mysterious beckonings of Thy hand. Continue, I pray Thee, to lead me in Thy way, to guide me in the paths of truth, however hidden to me they appear. Let me ever feel the influence of Thy heavenly will, that my feet may stumble not, my thoughts stray not, from things above. Make plain to me the teachings I am now about to receive, and open my understanding to Thy light, that I may more worthily serve Thee. And if Thy servant is to be an instrument for the dissemination of Thy holy truths here below, then, O Heavenly Father, sustain me in the sacred duty, and give me strength that I falter not."

At this moment there descended on the Bishop a ray of effulgent light coming from on high, and a solemn but gentle voice answered:

"Amen."

At the hour of nine the door of the ante-room was opened in some mysterious manner, and Bishop Angelo entered. His host, who had preceded him, motioned the Prelate to be seated, himself occupying a chair directly opposite, but rather, as it seemed, for the purpose of familiar converse than

for any more serious interview. After a few preliminary remarks the host continued:

"Be it known that there exists upon this earth but one supreme occult order, and that is the sacred order of the Magi. The origin of this order is lost in the dawn of time. When the tribes of Israel dispersed, it became divided into three branches, and presiding over each was a lawfully appointed Magus. One branch went to India, where Melchior established the order. Another, under Balthazar, remained in Egypt, having dominions over Persia, Arabia, and the adjoining countries. The third was located on what is now the European continent. Of this European branch I am now the head. My name is Gaspar, and the title of Magus was bestowed upon me by my predecessor, whose name will presently be disclosed to thee, together with the names of all the Magi who have preceded me. To our order belonged the three Magi, who, from the remotest parts of the earth, journeyed to Bethlehem, there to do homage, at His birth, to the great Master who was to give to the world the teachings of the order."

At this sudden disclosure Angelo was filled with awe, for now, for the first time, he found himself in the presence of one of that sacred order whose predecessors had adored at the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. His head was bowed in reverence, as before his mental vision there passed the succes-

sive incidents in the life and death of earth's greatest Master. Nor could he for a moment realize that before him stood a true successor of those who had witnessed the awful drama on Calvary, a successor possessed of all the occult learning, all the supreme worthiness and holiness of character, of the three "wise men of the East."

"With us, in our sacred temples," continued Gaspar, "the Child passed His youth from the age of twelve to the time when He entered on His mission in the world which received Him not, although that mission was to implant the seeds of truth eternal—truths that henceforth were never to perish, but to fructify and increase in the hearts of men, to become their spiritual food, to give them holiness in the life that is, and to bestow on them the more perfect happiness that awaits the humble disciple in the life everlasting.

"While among us, the Nazarene lived in our temples; little food did He eat, and few were the hours that He passed in sleep. His life was one of constant prayer. Alone He wandered forth in abstract mood, and seemed mentally to dwell in a world higher than our own. Often, in moments of intense devotion, His body became translucent, shining with such dazzling brightness that even the walls of the temple seemed to disappear amid the celestial radiance that surrounded Him, as though He had already entered upon the kingdom of His Heavenly Father.

"Little did He converse, though often expressing His gratitude to those who had admitted Him to our temples, for under their sacred shrines He could receive, directly, the influence of the Heavenly Father, bathe more fully in the divine aura, through the radiations of which came mandates from on high, with inspirations undefiled by the auras of earth.

"Thus it was that the young Nazarene did not receive direct instruction from our order, but the purity and loftiness of the aura emanating from our sacred shrine, destroying all earthly influences, enabled him, though still in the human body, and subject to its laws, to receive, unimpaired, the divine instruction and guidance with which the aura of the Heavenly Father is always impregnated.

"For remember well, my son, that it is transmitted in our sacred and most authentic records, that the human body, the human brain of Christ, was spiritualized through the same law that regulates the body and the brain of all men; its cells or molecules were subject to the same process as those of other men, and that is the purification and the harmonization of the particles of the human body with those of the celestial body. And this is accomplished through lofty thoughts, divine aspirations, holy practice, and heart-felt prayer, all of which place us in direct harmony with the attributes of the Heavenly Father. The

more we cultivate and develop these attributes, the nearer we approach to Him; the more we assimilate of His nature; the more we become one with Him. This, my brother, is the secret, the source, of all occult powers, of all divine occult powers, for to no other should man aspire.

"The sacred aura pervading our temples, excluding, as it did, all vibrations proceeding from earth, was peculiarly favorable to the harmonization of the human body and to the evolution of the cells composing it, until the point of complete assimilation with the divine was reached. Nor was the Nazarene exempt from this slow process of spiritualization; He also must part, so to speak, with Himself, and such parting does not take place without a struggle. This conquest of self is always attended with pain; the birth-throes of the Spirit are ever accompanied with suffering to the atoms of matter which they dislodge, and these do not vacate the temple of flesh without violent and oft-repeated protests, in the shape of innumerable temptations, assailing him who aspires to spiritual enlightenment. Hence it was that the Nazarene passed many years in our temple amid the desert."

No words can describe the emotions of the Archbishop while listening to this marvelous revelation. So sacred was the ground on which Gaspar was treading, so vivid his narrative, such the awe and rever-

ence which his teachings inspired, that his hearer felt almost as one suspended between heaven and earth, as one whose footsteps were already on the threshold of another world. Never, during the many startling experiences of his eventful life, had his soul been thrilled as it was now. Nor had the good Bishop any misgivings about the lawfulness of his mission. Rather did it appear as one fore-ordained to be fulfilled at that very moment, as a scene in which the principal actors were appointed of God Himself.

"And now," continued the Magus, pausing for a moment to select the words that followed, "it becomes my duty to inform thee that to this sacred order, of divine origin, thou shalt be admitted at high noon to-morrow. Thou, Angelo, the most worthy of the Masters of Himalay, shalt be invested with the highest office that can be bestowed on man. Retire, therefore, to thy chamber, and prepare thyself for the ceremony that awaits thee. When the time shall come thou wilt be summoned to the Sanctuary."

With senses half paralyzed, with fevered brain, and with uncertain step, the Archbishop withdrew to his room. Throwing himself on a settee, his head sunk upon his breast, tears in copious streams coursed down his cheeks.

Poor Angelo! on him was about to be conferred the foremost office that could be

bestowed on human being. On the morrow he would be invested with the highest sacerdotal functions in the gift of the sacred hierarchy. Yet in his inmost soul there was not the faintest consciousness of exaltation or of pride; rather was he appalled at the responsibility, and at what he deemed his own unworthiness.

"O my God, my Heavenly Father!" he exclaimed in agony of spirit, "lay not on me this heavy burden, but on some one worthier than myself. Behold, I am all undeserving of this holy office; temptations still assail me; worldly attractions beset my path. My desires are not always directed to Thee, and I would fain address my supplication to Thy sacred throne, they are but feeble and lukewarm aspirations. Not for me is this holy trust, and before Thee I can but fall prostrate, in all humility, and cry, in contrition of heart, '*Mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.*' "

And now passed quickly before him in review the leading incidents of his career since receiving the degrees in the Himalayan Brotherhood. Now were recalled to him the many temptations that had assailed him, the many weaknesses he had discovered in himself, all rendering him, in his own esteem, unworthy of the sacred office that awaited him. Of his many noble deeds, his lofty principles, the transcendent wisdom of his philosophy; of the manhood he had always displayed in espousing the

cause of right; of the childlike enthusiasm of his soul at the apprehension of new and elevated ideas; of his exceptional qualifications to sift the real truth from the many glittering theories and ideals presented to him almost daily by the outside schools of philosophy; of the fitness acquired by his thoroughly scientific attainments; of his absolute purity of character—of all these supreme qualities, which made him, perhaps, the only man in Europe worthy of the sacerdotal office, he was all unconscious. To him they appeared but as the natural appanage of man; to possess them was no merit, though to want them was indeed a loss.

At the temptations that at times assailed him, he was greatly concerned. Why did they come to him? They could be but the children of his own depraved nature, vestiges of the old Adam, of which he had not been able to purge himself; and until he had done so, until every temptation should pass by him without stopping at his door, until his life should resolve itself into one continuous aspiration toward the Father above, into one uninterrupted prayer, into a life that mirrored the heavenly radiance undimmed by the passing shadow of a cloud—not until then was he fitted to receive upon earth the sacred office of Magus.

Alas, in his noble efforts toward human perfection, little did he know that so long as man lives in the human body, just so

long will he be subject to the laws of the body, and the still baser laws of the flesh. For no man, however pure and guiltless in intent, can, while still in the flesh, prevent the thoughts of other men, whether good or evil, from flitting through the radiations of his personal aura, and thus gaining access to his brain. Yet he can prevent them from making a home there, and in this rejection of evil thoughts lies one of his brightest duties and highest responsibilities.

Long did Angelo remain in sore dejection of spirit, his head still bowed upon his breast, and at times giving utterance to a sob which no restraint could suppress. Gradually, however, a more gentle influence stole over him, soothing, encouraging, strengthening; and, as the vibrations of a sacred hymn attune the soul by placing it in harmony with its Maker, so the influence which now possessed him seemed to whisper in melodious strains a song of infinite harmony, bringing hope and peace to the suffering soul of the Archbishop. Raising his head and brushing away the tears that still lay on his cheek, with eyes uplifted toward heaven, and bright with an almost celestial radiance, he exclaimed in firm but submissive tones:

"Thy will be done, my Father, on earth even as it is in heaven. Thy servant shall obey, beseeching of Thee divine guidance and strength."

Much comforted, he arose from the *prie-dieu* at which he had been kneeling, and in doing so observed beside him, to his great astonishment, a scroll of paper inscribed with the words, "Assume the vestments of thy order." Beside it lay the white robes of the third degree of the Brethren of Himalay, which he had left in his palace at Liège. Thanking his unseen friend with renewed emotion at this manifestation of occult power, he proceeded to array himself in the spotless garments.

At high noon, when the spiritual forces are at their highest, Ralph informed the Archbishop that his master desired his presence in the Sanctuary.

Passing through the ante-room, he entered with downcast eyes the sacred chamber, where in front of him was a *prie-dieu* at which he knelt in supplication. This ended, with uplifted gaze he now perceived that light entered the Sanctuary from a central point overhead, through a large opening representing, in natural colors, the All-seeing Eye. Near the eastern wall was the shrine, a tabernacle of gold, on the door of which was the carved image of a lamb with the pilgrim's staff, placed upon an altar of the rarest marble. Above it was a magnificent painting of a woman whose features were radiant as those of an angel. Around her head was displayed a crown of glory, the divine halo or aura. The painting bore a great resemblance to the image

of Mary, the Mother of Christ, that may be seen in every Roman Catholic church; but under the figure were inscribed the words, so full of meaning to the Occultist, "Sophia, the Virgin of the World." Upon the southern wall was another painting representing the birth of Christ and the adoration of the three Magi. In the heavens shone the Mystic Star, its color that of the occult fire. Before the altar, suspended from the ceiling, hung a golden vase in which a tiny flame was burning.

While thus engrossed with his observations, strains of celestial melody were heard, and at the same moment a light stole into the Sanctuary, of the same mysterious hue that had often appeared to him at Liège. By degrees the music grew louder, yet sweeter in tone, while the light became effulgent. Presently the Sanctuary was filled with a radiance so bright that nothing else was visible, and yet of the mellowest golden hue. Such soul-stirring vibrations did these musical notes create that Angelo was almost in a supersensuous condition, so intensely did they work on his spiritual consciousness.

Almost before the Archbishop had realized his condition, the venerable Magus entered by a door opening near to the altar. From his body emanated rays of such brightness that even Angelo, accustomed as he was to spiritual light, could scarcely endure their brilliance. The form of the

Magus was garbed in white flowing robes; upon his breast and back was a cloth, bearing figures and inscriptions in a foreign tongue; on his head was a golden crown studded with glistening jewels. Directing his steps toward the shrine, and kneeling before it, he uttered a short but fervent prayer, then rising turned toward Angelo, whom, with arms extended, he thus addressed:

"May it please the Heavenly Father to open thine understanding to the truths which are presently to be revealed to thee, so thou mayest transmit them in all their fullness to those whose privilege it is to receive them. May He also open thy heart, that thou mayest love and cherish them, and may He give thee strength and courage, that thou mayest defend them even unto death—the death, if need be, of a martyr to the cause."

While Gaspar thus spoke, the Archbishop perceived that from his outstretched hands emanated a stream of golden light proceeding toward himself, and presently enveloping his entire frame. At the same time the molecular force of his brain seemed, as it were, to be revivified, developing there the three conditions prayed for, understanding, love, and courage.

"Ascend the steps of the altar," said the Magus, "and kneel at this prayer-desk, for at the foot of the sacred shrine, before the

image of the virgin Sophia, must the truth of heaven be revealed to thee."

Angelo obeyed, half trembling with awe, though inwardly fortified by the holy influence bestowed in answer to his prayer. Kneeling before Gaspar, he listened in rapt attention to the words that fell from his lips:

"In the midst of the turmoil of nations, through bloody revolutions and wars, when man killed man that monarchs might win or retain dominion over men, foster their insatiate ambition, or exact the homage and obedience of gods, the order of the Magi has ever been steadfast in its allegiance to the only true God, the Creator and Ruler of the Universe, the Father of us all, to whom we owe our being, from whom all things have sprung, and to whom all things must return. Our order has kept pure and undefiled the sacred records embodying the will of Him who reigns on high, obedience to which places us on the true path leading to the everlasting throne of Grace, to life eternal.

"The order of the Magi has also sacredly preserved, and is the only custodian of, the occult powers wielded by the wise men of old, by the prophets, and, above all, by Jesus of Nazareth, whom the world crucified—the world which He came to redeem from darkness and guide unto life eternal. And what is the object of these occult powers? In what do they consist? How can they be utilized for the benefit of men?

"Know then, my son, that man is ever the toy, the plaything, and completely at the mercy, of the influences that surround him. Driven from one belief to another, from one school of philosophy to another, acquiring habits from which it is almost impossible to extricate himself, controlled by the magnetic aura of men possessed of superior strength of will, attracted by the glittering religious baubles that strew the roadside of life, man is thus constantly subject to the domination of heterogeneous agencies which attract and too often overpower him. Thus arise countless modes and phases of life, with endless ramifications, until not only individuals, but entire communities and nations, are seen struggling in the path of error while striving to find the true one. Ever urged onward and upward by the spirit of the Infinite, or aura of the Heavenly Father, the breath of God permeating all things and beings, man never tires in his efforts to find the true aim of life, and, with it, his final destiny.

"In the midst of all this strife and discord, the order of the Magi has never swerved from the true and only path, and has always striven, so far as lay in its power, to induce men to direct their steps to it. For many long years, however, their efforts have been almost in vain, their powers dormant. Heartsore and in distress of soul, they have been compelled to remain the sad and silent witnesses of a world grop-

ing in ever-increasing darkness, the darkness of materialism, whose lowering cloud has overspread, as with the wings of a fallen angel, every quarter of the civilized globe.

"This lamentable condition has been largely due to the pernicious doctrines and policy of those who have assumed control of the religious world. The exponents of religion have, indeed, sought little else than the enhancement of their special creeds, overawing the minds of their devotees, in order to bring them to unquestioning obedience, holding constantly before them threats of awful and everlasting tortures, thus ascribing to the Almighty, the All-merciful, Him whose name is a synonym for good, atrocities that could hardly enter into the heart of the devil. Such, as they would have us believe, was the punishment foreordained for those who disobeyed their cruel and, at times, ridiculous articles of faith.

"Then came science. As it progressed its discoveries gradually proved that the precepts held as sacred by the religious bodies are the most absurd of fallacies. Having exposed the false pretensions of their priestly leaders, the men of science finding that many devotees of the church forsook their faith to become adherents to their own more attractive theories, these scientists, instead of remaining true to their calling, intoxicated with success as their followers increased in number, began to

propagate a most baneful system of philosophy. Thus came into existence the dark school of materialism, claiming the authority of science for the wildest vagaries and assertions of their pseudocreed.

"To-day, after long years of disbelief and irreligion, finding nothing in the promises of the gloomy creeds to satisfy the void left vacant in his soul, man, his spiritual nature utterly starved, has slowly returned to his search after truth, his aspirations after the Infinite; and in this search it behooves the sacred order of the Magi to direct his footsteps. Hence it has been determined to abandon the state of inaction in which it has been compelled to remain these many years. But for this purpose it requires devotees mature in wisdom and active both in mind and body. Thou, my worthy son, art the man who has been chosen to direct this sacred endeavor. My weary limbs, my enfeebled frame, are sufficient tokens of my inability to inaugurate a successful campaign against the monstrous evil of our day. On thee does the duty fall, and on thy shoulders will be placed the mantle of God's noblest warrior. Thou art my successor; thy name will also be Gaspar, and on the morrow thou wilt become the European Magus."

Instantly rising, with hands uplifted, and with awe-stricken gaze, as one over whom some dread calamity impended, Angelo cried out in anguish of soul:

"No, no, my holy Master, I am not worthy of the sacred office; I am but a weak and erring mortal, one too often tempted to sin. Oh, pardon me, but this I cannot, I dare not, accept."

"Here in the Sanctuary I will leave thee," calmly resumed the Magus; "kneel before the shrine and fervently ask from above divine support and guidance; in an hour I will return and receive thy answer."

CHAPTER III.

SLOWLY proceeding to the foot of the holy shrine, the Archbishop fell prostrate before it; but no word could he utter. Long did he remain as one from whom life had departed, an occasional sigh being the only indication that his spirit had not taken flight to Him before whose altar he worshipped in mute but fervent supplication. At length, slowly raising his head, he directed his gaze toward the tabernacle, where was the carved image of the lamb holding the pilgrim's staff. In this he dared not recognize the emblem of his own life, which presently was to be, though pilgrim and wanderer he might become, according to the words of Gaspar. The image was, indeed, that of the lamb, the emblem of purity, of innocence, of spirituality. Hence it could have no part in him, the man of the world, almost, who entered his cathedral in state, a trumpeter announcing his advent in blaring tones, while the people fell on their knees to receive his blessing. Was he sure that he had never felt, however secretly, a feeling of worldly satisfaction at this token of reverence?

"O Lamb of God!" he exclaimed, "Thou knowest my unworthiness to assume this sacred office."

At this moment, his prayer was interrupted by music of such sweetly solemn tones, such soul-entrancing and celestial harmony, as seldom has fallen on human ears, transfiguring the countenance of the Archbishop, removing from his features their expression of unutterable sadness, and filling his eyes with the light of joy and gladness. As by degrees the notes grew louder, they developed into a rhythmic melody in which was conveyed, as he thought, a mystic, but as yet unintelligible meaning.

While thus absorbed, the door of the holy tabernacle was slowly opened as by invisible hands, and in the depths of the shrine he beheld the All-seeing Eye enclosed in its mystic triangle, while the radiations proceeding from this emblem of the Heavenly Father gave forth a luster so dazzling that the Bishop could not look upon them except for the moment. Even the closing of his eyes did not obliterate the image of this occult emblem; he saw it as plainly as before, but not as before did its luster blind him. Then, from above, descended two celestial beings, who, hovering on white wings, displayed a scroll of gold above the shrine, and pronounced, in tones of sweetest melody, the mysterious words inscribed thereon:

"Thou art the chosen one; have faith, for thy election is from on high."

And now the music became still more spiritual, more exultant in its intonation. It was the "*Gloria in Excelsis*" of the angel world.

The Bishop now arose, and, uplifting his hands, cried, in a voice whose accents were no longer tremulous:

"Lord, Thy servant will obey. His life is in Thy hands, and Thou shalt order it as seemest good unto Thee."

At this moment, the venerable form of Gaspar appeared at the entrance of the Sanctuary. Angelo approached him, and making low obeisance, exclaimed:

"Master, before Thee stands Thy humble and dutiful son, ready to obey; command, and Thy orders shall be executed."

"Amen," answered Gaspar, with a placid smile of content, "for so God willeth it."

Inviting Angelo to follow, he then proceeded toward the altar, in front of which each took the position he had occupied before, Angelo at the prayer-desk, Gaspar standing near and opposite to him.

"I will now proceed with my discourse," continued the Magus.

"Man lost faith, as I have said, in his religious leaders, and, consequently, in the dogmas they gave forth, as handed down by God Himself, loss of faith having for its cause the discoveries of science, which proved erroneous many so-called truths,

and the consequent pretensions of the scientist to be himself almost a God, declaring that henceforth man should believe only that of which he should approve, and claiming that if there be a God, he will surely find him, no matter how far distant in space his abode.

"The supreme task of our order, and consequently thy first duty, will be to kindle anew in man the true and living faith; not faith in dogmas or in creeds, but faith in God, the Divine Ruler of the Universe, whom we address as 'Our Father in Heaven.' In Him all empires, all nations, all creeds, can harmonize, for He is supreme above all, and other beliefs are merely secondary. As above Mohammed is Allah, above Buddha, Brahm and Parabrahm, and above Moses, Jehovah, so above Christ is God, His Father.

"We must then inspire man with the true religion. We must again, as it were, bind him to his God, place him on the only path that leads to life everlasting. And now let me explain to thee more fully the doctrines of our order, the origin and the secret of its occult powers, together with the fundamental laws which underlie them. Occult phenomena of whatever kind, when not based upon these laws, can only proceed from the art of the magician. Magic, whether white or black, is unlawful, and both are discountenanced by the true occultist.

"First among all occult powers is the power begotten by faith—faith in God—such perfect and abiding faith as places, with absolute trust, life and destiny in His hands, living in Him and for Him. Faith of such intensity begets the gift of healing all ailments of the human body. And this gift is the reward of such faith, regardless of any secondary beliefs that the devotee may profess, or of the church or sect to which he may belong, since faith in the Supreme Being takes precedence over all other religious states of the mind or soul.

"Faith places man in harmony with God, with all the laws of the Universe; furthermore, a divine aura of such density gathers around the truly faithful, that the projection of its rays induces harmonious conditions in those who seek to be healed, and although these conditions may last but for a moment, their duration depending on the worthiness or receptivity of the patient, they may nevertheless be sufficient to restore to its natural channel the flow of life-forces which had been perverted by opposite conditions of the mind or body, thus removing the cause of illness from him who asks relief.

"Will, developed preternaturally through long-continued exercise and practice, gives mastery over many conditions of matter, and may endow us with the gift, as some people consider it, of performing miracles. This control over matter is not necessarily dependent on a religious life; the vibrations

emitted by a powerful will can, in many instances, pervert ordinary manifestations of nature, create apparitions, cast out devils from the so-called insane or possessed, and this power is what constitutes the art of magic. Where these powers are used for evil purposes, they become what is termed 'black magic.'

"Will, grown strong through a life-long battle with the conditions of earth, its allurements, its sin, over all of which it has finally triumphed—such will is the real fruitful, occult will, the divine.

"The sciences, with astronomy as a base, will lead to an understanding of the laws of matter, as far as known. Philosophy will give to these studies an upward direction, and become the link between the material and the spiritual, for the spiritual cannot fail to be evolved, in every true soul, from the knowledge and comprehension of the beautiful manifestations and harmonies of the universe. Understanding, elevated to the spiritual plane, begets love, love divine, love supreme and universal, not only for man, but for beast, and plant, and all that is. This love, ever partaking, though unconsciously, of the universal soul, attracts individual souls, these being fragments, more or less pure, more or less developed, of the universal soul. Love, thus reaching the soul of man, has power to uplift it through the operations of the divine occult will, and bring it into harmony with the

Spirit of God. While faith heals the body by restoring to harmony the parts that were diseased, will creates conditions permitting the successful workings of the powers of faith.

"When divine faith, divine love, and divine will, are united in one human being, this being becomes itself divine, becomes itself a Master. His faith enables him to heal the ailments of the body, his love to minister to the needs of the soul and to lead it on the true road to God, while will gives him the power to harmonize natural conditions; thus the health of body and soul are maintained, and the latter is freed from the influence of outward and retarding agencies.

"Divine faith, when unaccompanied by scientific learning, begets the gift of healing, but no other gifts inure.

"When love divine is deprived of faith, it becomes what may be termed intellectual spirituality, with the gifts of influencing souls for good, but with no other gifts. Intellectual spirituality, without divine faith, resembles somewhat a tall and slender tree which may overtop the surrounding forest, but its slim trunk will sway unceasingly to and fro before the breath of philosophical breezes, which now-a-days are continuously springing up in the schools of learning; but if it have faith, while its growth in air would be equally rapid, the tree would develop a strong, healthy body, the roots of

which would anchor deep in the clefts of the rock of ages, and be proof against all the blasts which the intellectual world unceasingly hurls against those who dare to transcend the plane of the common mortal.

"It must, however, be well understood that the gifts of healing obtained through faith, or the power of subverting the order of nature through abnormal strength of will, or even the divine gift of influencing souls for good, is in reality no gift at all, but purely and simply the natural sequence of the devotee's spiritual condition. All changes which the human mind undergoes are accompanied by a corresponding change in the physiological condition of the cells of his brain, for brain-cells are very important living entities, having birth and growth, and are subject to the laws of evolution, as well as all other things in nature. All moral, mental, or spiritual discipline affects these cells, gives them higher qualities, and when they have attained a certain state of evolution requisite for the emission of an aura whose magnetic radiations carry the power to heal, or to effect certain phenomena of nature, or to help human souls in their upward endeavor, then such power manifests itself as a natural sequence of the developed condition of the brain-cells. This is purely a physical process, and not at all miraculous.

"It is indeed possible that persons may be born with brain-cells in a state of natural

development similar to those acquired under any of the three conditions of spiritual discipline above described, and by the devotee, begotten only through earnest endeavor and prayer. In such cases the native condition of the brain-cells endows the person in whom they occur—and that through purely physical causes—with powers similar to those of the devotee, without regard to the moral or religious condition of the individual thus favored. On the other hand, it may happen in the case of a devotee, no matter how tenacious the earnestness of his faith, how great the strength of his will, or how deep the intensity of his love, that pre or post natal physical conditions hinder the harmonious development of his brain-cells, and thus debar him from powers the acquisition of which he would have been justified in expecting. We meet occasionally in life illustrations of these cases.

"It may perhaps be as well to explain here the theory of brain-cells, those microscopical, innumerable little worlds constituting the brain of man, and which are the occult agents of all its wonderful activities.

"Cells of various descriptions constitute the principal portions of all organisms; they have their poles and dia-magnetism; their attractions and repulsions; their birth, growth, evolution, multiplication, and often death. As, in this instance, we are mainly concerned with those brain-cells to which the outworking of the higher functions of

life has been intrusted, we will confine ourselves to an explanation of the functions and action of these only.

"To convey to the mind a clear conception of a cell, we will compare it to an egg. The cell has an outside envelope or membrane containing a quantity of protoplasmic, or, rather, cytoplasmic matter, the entire cell being protoplasmic; this matter itself holding within its mass a nucleus of more refined material. We will compare the outside of the cell to the shell of the egg; the region of cytoplasmic matter, to the white; and the nucleus, to the yelk. Within this nucleus, or yelk, is a nucleolus, and within this nucleolus are discovered little specks, or intra-nucleolar bodies. We will, for the present, omit to speak of the centrosomes in the archoplasm. [Full explanation in regard to these very important bodies recently discovered in the cell, will be found in the Appendix, at the end of this volume, page 244.] Now, in the man whose nature is purely materialistic, this is the only matter the brain-cells contain: they are spiritually unfructified. In human beings whose souls have taken birth and grown into consciousness, the eye of the seer discovers amid the intra-nucleolar bodies a speck of intense whiteness, growing in brilliancy as the spiritual development of the cell progresses. This luminous point indicates that the cell is spiritually fructified, having received within itself, as the reward of a pure and

well-ordered life, a spark from the Spirit of the Infinite, a concretion of divine aura of the breath of God, constituting the basis of immortality—the first step toward the union of man with his Maker.

"But in the case of the man who is entirely absorbed in things material, the man whose soul has not yet entered the state of consciousness, his brain-cells contain no point of light, no intra-nucleolar brilliancy, though surrounded, like every other entity, by the Spirit of God, the divine aura, awaiting only the first aspiration of the awakening soul to condense into a luminous spark, to fructify the brain-cells, and lay the ground-work of his immortality. These brain-cells are the very embodiment of man's moral, intellectual, and spiritual nature, and unerringly indicate his condition and progress, whether toward animalism or spirituality.

"We will now proceed to explain the very important occult process of this growth and evolution of the brain-cells.

"When the fructified egg is surrounded with conditions congenial to the development of the life principle which it contains, that is, with a certain degree of heat, this life principle gradually expands, feeding upon the yelk and the white of the egg, which have gradually been converted into food through the action of heat. The conditions remaining favorable, the life principle gradually becomes life itself, an entity

with a force of its own, which it uses, at the proper time, to burst its prison walls (the shell of the egg), from which it emerges fitted to enter upon a career of higher activities. And thus it is with the cells composing the brain of man.

"For a first illustration, we will take a cell already possessed of the luminous atom, and hence belonging to the brain of a man awakened to spiritual consciousness. If this man, following the promptings of his soul, seriously resolves to lead a life in accordance with the laws of the Spirit, enters resolutely upon the upward path, conforms his actions to his ideals, purifies his thoughts, and aspires to become one with God, then does he surround the spiritual atom of the brain-cell with conditions congenial to its growth. Under this vivifying influence, the living atom rapidly expands, increases in brightness, becomes stronger as by degrees it transforms and absorbs the intra-nucleolar bodies, the nucleolus and the nucleus on which it feeds, just as with the life principle of the egg finding sustenance in the yelk. When from the nucleus it has taken all the matter it could assimilate, this spiritual atom now finds itself in contact with the cytoplasmic element of the cell. After taking therefrom the little matter it was capable of refining, having now gained mastership over the cell, it bursts the membrane enclosing it, emerges into life a new and higher

entity, and the old cell falls to pieces, or, as the men of science properly designate it, is destroyed by granulation.

"The spiritual atom, now set free and of great radiance, we will compare to a bright nucleus in the head of a comet, the tail of which is composed of the most refined matter, both of the nucleus and the cytoplasm of the old cell. That which is not absorbed is rejected, and its granules are slowly eliminated from the brain, and soon thereafter from the body. This cometary cell will now gradually condense into a complete cell; but this new cell will enter upon its career with a spiritual germ of larger development, will have attained a higher plane in the realms of the spiritual, be surrounded by a brighter aura, with extended radiations, and hence will be possessed of greater powers. And now, if this new cell be again surrounded by higher conditions of spirituality, the same process of evolution will obtain anew, the spiritual germ will enlarge, will finally burst its shell, and once more emerge from it, a higher entity. A nearer approach will have been made toward its Maker; granulation will set in, as before, and, repeating the process, the liberated spiritual atom will recommence building a new cell, an abode of its own still more perfect than the previous one. Thus will it be until it reaches the mansions of the Eternal, where finally it will rest amid glory and bliss unspeakable.

"These cells, as we have said before, are small microscopical worlds, endowed with polarity, and consequently with well-defined attractions and repulsions. They possess an aura, the distinctive radiations of which convey the qualities of the cell, and hence exert a certain influence either for good or evil. The sum total of these brain-cell radiations constitutes the aura or halo surrounding the head of man.

"For a second illustration of the workings of these brain-cells we will now take a cell as we find it in the brain of an intellectual man, a man of science, for instance, in which the divine atom may or may not exist.

"We will suppose that this man uses his intellectual powers in search of purely scientific truths, makes record simply of the facts he discovers, is content with the approbation of his fellow-men, and never lifts an eye toward the Creator of all things. How does the brain-cell of this man appear?

"If the spiritual atom exists at all in this brain-cell, and has not been expelled by increasing materialistic tendencies, it will remain *in statu quo*, for the conditions surrounding it are not congenial to its growth or evolution. The nucleus of the cell—the seat of man's intellect—will, however, expand, develop, intrude upon the cytoplasmic region, convert to its own use more or less of its coarse matter, in proportion to the degree of materialism existing in the man

of science. The cell will also granulate, preparatory to the formation of a cell of higher intellectual order. And this process of intellectualization will continue so long as the main efforts of this man center upon intellectual studies pursued for material ends. The spiritual germ of this cell, however, will remain dormant.

"The brain-cell of the merely animal man, though in a measure endowed with intellect, finds the principles of its activities in the cytoplasmic region. As he possesses but little intellectual ambition, this nucleus no longer finds conditions congenial to its growth; hence it remains latent, if not fatally degraded by gradual absorption into the cytoplasmic region, for the demands of animalism as displayed in the depravity of human passions are all-absorbing and inexorable. The brain-cells of such a man also granulate successively, and their evolution is retrograde, for they grow in animality; but, mark well, when this animality transgresses certain limits, the cells, after granulation, die, and no re-birth ensues. For this man there is no immortality, since immortality awaits only those into whose brain-cells the divine spark, the Spirit of the Eternal, has entered. Though every cell, even in the brain of the animal man, is surrounded with the divine aura, this aura, having failed to obtain recognition, returns to the spirit reservoir of nature, there to await a new incarnation. Immortality can-

not be bestowed as a gift; it must be won as a prize, for such is the fiat of the Everlasting.

"Strongly would we impress on our disciples that the evolution of a brain-cell is a process of growth, which, in order to be healthy, harmonious, and lasting, must also be gradual. A calm, spiritual life, trusting in God with a plenitude of faith; patient submission in His name to all vicissitudes; the fulfillment of all earthly duties; the doing, in a quiet way, of all possible good to our fellow-beings, and the exercise of the broadest tolerance of, and charity toward, the opinions, beliefs, and actions of others for whom we should always feel and profess respect—these are the fundamental requirements for the formation of a pure and healthy brain-cell. An excess of effort, a restless anxiety for progress or for the possession of occult powers, merely serves to engender nervous excitement, followed by disease of the nerve centers, and sometimes causing insanity.

"To bring home to the mind of the disciple a still clearer understanding of this most important occult truth, it is well again to illustrate it by giving an outline of the force involved in the formation of a natural crystal. If we dissolve a salt in water and apply a gentle heat, causing slow evaporation, elements toward the formation of a crystal will soon be seen in activity; and if the mixture be left undisturbed, a crystal

of geometrical form, characteristic of the salt dissolved, will gradually take shape, possessing all the attributes and forces of a perfect crystal — polarity, dia-magnetism, attraction, and repulsion. It will also be surrounded by a well-defined auric corona. If this process of evaporation be found too slow, crystallization may be hastened by agitating the solution. The result, however, would be, that instead of one perfect crystal, there would be many of multiform shapes, but none possessing the geometrical outline characteristic of a perfect crystallization. These various and heterogeneous crystals would have the forces of polarization acting abnormally, erratic attractions and repulsions; and these forces would produce disharmony whenever and wherever called into activity. As with the crystal, so with the cells out of which spring the activities of the human brain. Similar agencies are at work in the formation of both.

"Hence, let our disciple be calm, possessing his soul in peace, and awaiting God's own time for the baptism of the spirit, and the development of occult powers. If he continue to surround the divine atoms contained in the cells of his brain with conditions congenial to their evolution, these endowments and powers will surely ensue, for they are but the inevitable outcome of a divinely constituted brain-cell, and the aura surrounding this cell is possessed of the greatest of all occult powers.

"When the spiritual evolution of the brain-cell has been induced by supreme faith in God, healing the sick will, as I have said, be the occult power derived. The evolution of the cell, resulting from such faith, accompanied with intellectual spirituality or the philosophic understanding of the laws and harmonies governing the manifestations of the Universe, brings into existence the power of healing the mind as well as the body, and even of influencing the souls of men.

"But the brain-cell whose evolution proceeds from intellectual spirituality alone will not possess the gift of healing either body or mind. Though it may be the brain-cell of a person professing veneration for the Author of all that is, nevertheless, if that man be lacking in the perfect and living faith which has its root in the inmost depths of being, its aura will not have attained the healing power, though it may exercise a great influence for good over minds susceptible to its odic radiations.

"The power of will, approaching almost the divine, and vouchsafed only to him who has achieved successive victories over the obstacles that stand in the path of spiritual growth—such power acquires, after many evolutions of the cell, a certain control over matter. If this will is allied with faith in God and intellectual understanding, the occult powers become very great, and may, after many evolutions, become almost limitless.

"To conclude, then, and to render still clearer the laws of our spiritual evolution, the principal attributes of our Divine Maker are infinite harmony and goodness, or love, omniscience, and omnipotence. According to the degree of earnestness with which man tries to develop these attributes within himself, in the same degree does he approach nearer to God.

"Hence, divine faith, based on a progressive and philosophic comprehension of the divine phenomena of nature, leads us, through a series of innumerable granulations and re-births of the brain-cells, toward love and harmony, culminating in the great consummation, the influx of the Holy Spirit, whereby we are exalted, step by step, to the portals of omniscience.

"The development of the divine will, based upon understanding and faith, bestows an ever-increasing control over matter, in proportion as our brain-cells undergo their ever-ascending transformations. This places us fairly on the road toward the greatest attribute of God, omnipotence. Thus man, having latent within him all the attributes of his Maker, may, after the lapse of eons, and through a perfect and continuous process of evolution, become one with God Himself.

"These, my son, are the fundamental principles underlying all occult manifestations."

The Archbishop, almost overwhelmed by these new revelations, although the scientific explanations vouchsafed by the Magus caused him deep pleasure, bowed his head in respectful assent.

"And now that the teachings of the order are indorsed by thine inner consciousness; now that with heart and soul thou canst work for their dissemination, thou art prepared to be invested with the insignia of office. Proceed, therefore, to the prayer-desk in the center of the Sanctuary, before which is an altar; upon this altar lies a golden cushion supporting the mystic lamp whose light is a star. The cushion signifies peace; the lamp is a symbol of light—'Light and Peace' being the motto of the order of the Magi. Offer up thy soul to God, for presently thou shalt be more than man."

The Archbishop obeyed, and kneeling before the altar—now, however, with uplifted eyes—offered up a humble and fervent supplication, having murmured, as he touched his breast, "*Non sum dignus; non sum dignus.*"

CHAPTER IV.

MEANWHILE the Magus stood in front of the golden vase suspended before the shrine and containing the sacred fire. Here, in a low voice, he continued to recite a prayer or incantation, the rhythm of which emitted vibrations which strangely affected Angelo, who felt, however, that they were not diverted upon himself. While thus engaged, the Magus passed his hands several times above, over, and around the fire, as one making magnetic passes; and, as he proceeded with the ceremonies, the flame appeared to increase in volume and brilliancy. Taking from a golden casket a handful of granules apparently of some kind of aromatic gum—the frankincense of the Magi—he threw them into the vase. The effect was instantaneous; the flame shot upward, and the Sanctuary was gradually filled with a perfume charged with a potent spiritualizing influence; such, at least, was its effect on Angelo, who felt as if all senses of the flesh were benumbed to open wider the avenue of the soul.

Gaspar then proceeded to the northern side of the Sanctuary, where, by means of a cord attached to the wall, he opened the window in the center of the dome overhead,

representing the All-seeing Eye. The vapor proceeding from the burning incense then arose in spiral form through the opening, and disappeared in air. He then returned to the shrine, before which he bowed low, and soon was absorbed in prayer.

And now the solemn stillness of the Sanctuary was broken by the distant rumbling of thunder, whose tones reverberated in ever-increasing volume. Presently a gleam of lightning shot athwart the dome from which looked down the All-seeing Eye.

"My brother," exclaimed Gaspar, as he arose to his feet and stood with uplifted gaze, "the Egyptian Magus is approaching."

A moment later a blinding flash illumined the Sanctuary, and with it a thunder crash directly overhead shook, as with the concussion of an earthquake, the walls of the sacred temple. Then a cloud of brilliant light descended into the holy place, and, behold! there stood before the marble altar, in front of the shrine, a being of divine aspect, his eyes beaming with infinite love; his noble features of most perfect outline, but gentle and delicate as those of a woman; in complexion dark, and with thin, silken locks, silvered by the touch of time. His head-dress, resembling a turban, was fashioned of silk, of delicate texture, having in front an aigrette fastened into it with a rare and precious stone, and above it a golden crown. His robes were of spotless white, long and flowing, and over them he

wore another vestment, also white and of the finest material, plaited in many folds and fastened at the shoulder by a golden clasp. Upon his breast and over his back he wore a square-cut garment of cloth of gold, bearing an inscription intimating that he who wore it held dominion over the tribes of Egypt and other lands. After kneeling in the act of devotion before the shrine, he moved toward Gaspar, and as they met, each inclined toward the other, their foreheads meeting and remaining in contact for the space of a minute, as if in silent communion; then, turning toward Angelo, Gaspar quietly said:

"This is Balthazar, the Magus of Egypt."

With a heavenly smile illuminating his face, Balthazar extended his arms toward Angelo, and as he did so the odic flames enwrapped him with their radiance. In acknowledgment of the sanctity of the Egyptian Magus, the Archbishop made low obeisance before him.

And now Gaspar, again approaching the sacred fire, threw into it a handful of scented wood, whereupon the Sanctuary became filled with a sweet but pungent odor; again the flames increased in volume, the perfume arose in a thin, transparent mist, and passing through the opening in the dome was lost in air.

The two Magi now took seats on either side of the shrine, upon a dais extended before the altar. A moment later the sacred

fire grew strangely bright, and soon shot forth in tongues of flame in every direction and darting upward toward the dome. Gradually they appeared to form themselves into serpents of fire, and soon a sound as of hissing began to be heard, while fiery serpents with tongues of flame darted to and fro, moving in spiral curves through every part of the Sanctuary. Finally the hissing became louder and more terrible, the serpents of fire arose upward toward the dome, which appeared as if in flames, and an instant later the Magus of India stood by the shrine, bowing in adoration before it.

He, also, was of a noble type of manhood. His features were striking, but unlike those of the other Magi. His eyes, although bearing the dreamy and inward look of the mystic, had, nevertheless, an expression of great power, in harmony with his features, which were somewhat stern in cast, with strong facial lines betokening unusual strength of character. As the three holy personages met, bringing their foreheads in contact with each other, a perfect communion, a perfect bond of harmony, was established between them. Turning again toward Angelo, Gaspar said:

"This is Melchior, the Indian Magus."

Extending his hands toward Angelo, he also bathed him in an effulgence of his own aura, which was felt by the Archbishop to possess the same virtue as that of the other Magi, but suggesting the impres-

sion of greater strength of will. Angelo bowed before him, and the harmony between the three wise men and the neophyte was complete.

Surprised, indeed, was Angelo that the Magus of India was entirely unknown to him. When taking the third degree in the mountains of Himalay, he had supposed that the Supreme Master was the head of the occult order there, but from the more brilliant aura of Melchior, and the divine influence radiating from his entire being, he perceived that he must be vastly superior to him who presided over the community at the monastery of Thibet.

And now the three Magi, kneeling before the altar, prepared for the ceremony of initiation. Dressed in white linen robes, the attendant, Ralph, entering by a side door, brought into the Sanctuary a mantle fashioned of most brilliant cloth of gold, which the Egyptian Magus placed on the shoulder of Gaspar. Then was handed to Melchior, and by him in turn to Gaspar, a small golden vase suspended from thin golden chains, in pattern resembling the one containing the sacred fire.

Gaspar now proceeded to fill the smaller vase or censer with burning coals from the sacred fire; in the hands of Balthazar and Melchior were also golden vases studded with rare and costly jewels, the one filled with frankincense, the other with myrrh. With a golden spoon Gaspar poured into

the sacred fire a portion of the contents of each. Then the Magi bent low before the shrine and offered up prayers, chanting them with solemn intonation. The Egyptian and Hindoo stood one on either side of the European Magus, each holding an end of the golden mantle which covered the form of Gaspar; the latter, raising his head toward the shrine, swung his censer thrice toward it in token of adoration.

And now, still chanting prayers, they arose, and while Gaspar swung the censer before him, the other Magi still upholding the golden mantle, all three passed around the altar, and then made the circuit of the entire Sanctuary, the censer still giving forth its incense as if to drive away all earthly influences that might yet linger in the temple.

Returning to the main altar, the Magi knelt again in front of the shrine, where the censer was nine times swung before it, enshrouding it in vapor. A spiritual song or hymn, such as Angelo never before had heard, was now intoned, and, as if in response, a sweet celestial melody of voices and instruments arose and filled the place, while amid the incense which floated above the shrine appeared a choir of angelic beings hovering on white wings. Their music, interblending with the intonations of the Magi, seemed to obliterate all the material part of the Sanctuary, save only the shrine, which now shone like a brilliant

meteor, the temple being filled with a golden cloud and illumined with the glory of the shrine.

Descending from the altar with slow and stately tread, the Magi now turned toward Angelo, who, overawed by this celestial vision, had inclined his head upon the prayer-desk, where still it rested. Raising his eyes he now beheld the three Masters, calm in mien, of godlike aspect, arrayed as in the pure garbs of holiness, each resplendent with an aura of surpassing radiance shining like a sun—Gaspar bright with a golden effulgence, and Melchior and Balthazar with halos of paler hue, but none the less dazzling in their brilliancy.

Attended by the other Masters, who still upheld his golden mantle, Gaspar passed thrice around Angelo, chanting a pæan of joy. Then once more the Magi ascended the steps of the altar, and while the heavenly choir poured forth its divine harmonies, Gaspar, swinging the censer three times toward the Archbishop, exclaimed in accents gently modulated, yet distinctly heard throughout the Sanctuary: "Angelo, thou hast been found worthy, and now shalt thou be exalted to the dignity of Magus."

In answer to these words, the Prelate was about to offer a humble protest, when from the All-seeing Eye overhead proceeded a stream of golden light so dazzling that he could not utter a word.

The Egyptian Magus now took the censer from the hands of Gaspar, and swinging it toward the Archbishop, repeated in similar words: "Angelo, thou hast been found worthy, and on thee shall fall the mantle of the European Magus."

Thereupon flashes of lightning shot athwart the dome overhead, and the crash of thunder shook the walls of the Sanctuary, as had occurred when Balthazar first stood in his astral body in front of the altar.

The censer was then handed to the Hindoo Magus, and as he swung it to and fro serpents of fire seemed to dart their tongues of flame at Angelo, hissing as before in loud and threatening tones. But not a whit was he disturbed by these demonstrations of occult power, for so entrancing was the music of the celestial choir that his soul was exalted to the heavens, as it were, and he knew not the sensation of fear.

This ceremony ended, Gaspar, proceeding to the sacred shrine, opened the door of the tabernacle, and taking therefrom a small golden vase containing consecrated oil approached the Archbishop whom he thus addressed:

"In this vase is oil extracted from the seeds of the sacred plant, with which the fire of the Magi has been kept alive for many centuries of the past. The shrub was grown in Palestine, and was gathered by virgins. This oil is transmitted by the

Magi to their successors, and blessed by each of them in turn; it is endowed with the highest of occult powers. With it I will anoint thee."

Uttering with great solemnity a few sonorous sentences pronounced in an unknown tongue, the Magus, placing the thumb of his dexter hand in the oil, proceeded to rub the forehead of the Archbishop between the eyebrows.

Immediately his language was understood by Angelo, whose intelligence was quickened and expanded by the anointing of oil.

"May it please the Almighty God," prayed Gaspar, "to give thee the understanding of things divine, so that, from this time forth and forevermore, the stars, the planets, and this our earth, with the nations that dwell thereon, will have for thee no secrets."

Then, proceeding to anoint the eye of the Prelate, he continued:

"May it please our Heavenly Father so to enlighten thy spiritual vision that thou mayest behold Him in His own almighty presence, through the medium of this His holy shrine, where He deigns to dwell amid the sacred rays of the divine aura here concentrated by the prayers and exercises of the Magi."

At this moment there shot forth from the altar, like a ray from the throne of the Eternal, a dazzling streak of golden light, enshrouding the Archbishop with such

ineffable radiance that it seemed to permeate his entire being, as if his body were composed of spirit unalloyed by the presence of matter. All the cells of body and brain seemed to become harmonized into one; the very portals of heaven appeared to open before him, making him realize that now he was indeed in the presence, in the visible and tangible radiation, of the Infinite Author of all things.

Finally, placing his thumb on the tongue of Angelo, Gaspar endowed the vocal organ with the gift of speech in all languages, and with the gift of eloquence to utter the dictates and inspirations of the Heavenly Father. His ears he opened to apprehend at will the voices of angels and the thoughts of all who were pure in spirit. His hands he consecrated to the healing of the sick in body or mind; his feet, to the guidance of the lost into the true path of life; and his heart, to the love of all that is, the first and foremost object of that love being God, the Infinite Spirit.

"And now," said Melchior, the Hindoo Magus, "let the Supreme Master of the Brethren of Himalay appear before us, and let it be his will to divest the candidate of the robes of his order, which he himself placed upon Angelo."

In a moment, prostrate before the shrine lay the form of the Supreme Master who had presented to Angelo his robes of purest white when he was admitted to the third

degree at the monastery in Thibet. After an act of adoration he approached his former disciple, on whom he cast a glance of mingled affection and reverence. His mission performed, he at once disappeared, tarrying only long enough to bestow on him his blessing, and to ask in return that Angelo would remember him in his prayers.

Gaspar now proceeded to divest himself of the vestments of his office, which, one by one, he placed upon Angelo, the celestial choir meanwhile pouring forth such triumphal notes of joy, such soul-entrancing melody, that the vibrations produced conveyed to all the participants in the ceremony a realization of the immediate presence of the Deity.

While placing on the shoulders of Angelo the cloth of gold, upon which were embroidered characters in an unknown tongue, Gaspar explained: "This is the most sacred of all the insignia of the office of Magus. It is many centuries old, and has been worn by every Magus of this branch of the order from the time of its origin. It is permeated with the auras of all the wise and holy men whose vestment it has been; its influence for good is almost unlimited, and surpassed only by that of the Deity Himself. In its semblance thou wilt cause to be made a talisman before wearing, which thou must place, together with the cloth of gold, in the shrine. This talisman thou must always wear, for never canst thou

otherwise make use of the occult powers presently to be vested in thee. The cloth of gold will remain in the shrine, as also the sacred oil. And now we present to thee another emblem of the supreme dignity bestowed upon thee."

With these words he removed the golden crown from his own head, and placed it upon Angelo's.

Then the three Masters, extending their hands over him, pronounced together in solemn tones these words: "Thou art King, King in the Kingdom of the Heavenly Father; King of equal rank with ourselves, and to hasten the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth must all our powers be directed."

"So mote it be," answered a mysterious voice proceeding from the shrine.

"Thy name is Gaspar," exclaimed the Magi, "and thou wilt bear it forever."

"Accept this scroll of papyrus," continued the self-deposed Magus, with enfeebled voice. "Thou canst now read its foreign characters, for they are no longer unknown to thee. Upon it are written the names of all those who have been elevated to the sacred rank of Magus, and the instructions vouchsafed to the head of the order by the wise men of the east, by those who have been found most worthy of this holy office. On a smaller scroll contained within, thou wilt find the names of certain members be-

longing to the European branch of the order."

During these solemn rites the strains of the celestial choir still blended with the voices of the Magi, while faint gleams of lightning, the roll of distant thunder, and serpentine flames of fire, glancing athwart the walls of the temple, added to the weird and supernatural aspect of the ceremony.

And now, the Indian and Egyptian Magi placed their foreheads against the forehead of Angelo, who at once became conscious of their supreme spirituality and worthiness, while they in turn realized the spiritual status of Angelo.

At that moment, and thenceforth forever, a condition of supreme harmony was established between the newly anointed Magus and his brethren.

The Magi then turned toward the altar, and as he who had resigned his holy office stood before it, with hands and eyes uplifted toward heaven, his countenance shone like that of an angel. The golden radiance of the shrine enfolded him, and as the melodies of the celestial choir grew still more ethereal and sublime, he appeared as one transfigured. Turning toward his hearers, in a low, musical, but impressive voice, as if proceeding from the spirit rather than from the flesh, he said:

"Soon shall I return to my Heavenly Father to render an account of my stewardship here below; for great is my age—much

greater than the number of years allotted as the span of human life. A period of great activity of religious, social, and political revolution (peaceful, let us hope) is near at hand, and our sacred order must play an important part in the events that will soon take place among the nations of the earth. All the powers of which mind and body are capable will be required in the coming contest between truth and falsity, and of physical force I have none to give."

Turning toward his newly installed successor, he said:

"The sphere of thy activities will mainly lie beyond the seas, on the great continent of America, where Liberty has made her abode. The inhabitant of that country is essentially a servant of God, since fealty to religious belief in the face of most terrible persecution drove him to that new world, there to dwell amid the severest hardships. Placed upon an unknown continent, face to face with primitive nature, he made a home for himself and for those he loved, while incessantly battling against well-nigh insurmountable obstacles. Wild beasts molested him, the forests prostrated him with malaria, and savage man made constant war upon him, hourly endangering his life. But through courage, perseverance and implicit faith in his Heavenly Father, he emerged victorious from his long and bitter struggle.

"Under such conditions the American could not fail to develop into a child of

nature, a very child of God. No schools of transcendental philosophy there existed to dwarf his natural instincts, his native common sense. Such environment necessarily produced in him a unique individuality, an independence of spirit that could never stoop to profess belief in principles which the inner consciousness could not admit. On the other hand, his manhood would readily yield allegiance to such religious beliefs as he found superior to his own; for the American is eminently progressive, a constant searcher after higher truths, and a restless investigator of the most hidden laws of nature.

"Such are the characteristics of the true American, and to-day he is less prejudiced, more open to truth, given to a wider field of ethical, philosophical, and spiritual investigation, than the inhabitant of any other country on earth. To that country, therefore, must thou go, meeting there thy brother Magi, when the planetary conjunctions shall be favorable. In those western lands shalt thou, in concert with thy compeers, select for consecration the most worthy of Americans, who shall establish tabernacles and shrines in all parts of that continent, so that through every quarter of the world our order may extend its beneficent, exalting, and purifying influence."

"When the proper time shall arrive," responded the three Magi, "on the continent of America shall we meet."

"And now," continued Gaspar, "as one about to be summoned from his earthly abode conveys to his kindred his worldly goods, so do I intrust to thee other and far more valuable possessions which I have gained during the long years of my study and pilgrimage. Give heed to my words, for it is from the threshold of my heavenly home that now I speak.

"The present cycle of time, the end of which is fast approaching, will terminate, as every cycle has terminated in the past, with a general upheaval of those elements of human social organization whose rights are being willfully and selfishly ignored; whose forces, having failed to gain recognition, are now pent up under a despotic pressure, but are ready to burst forth from the dark dungeon of suppression whenever the proper impetus shall be supplied. This impetus will be given by the strong occult influences which invariably become manifest at the end of a cycle heralding the approach of a new one.

"'What,' thou mayest ask, 'are these occult forces?' Often hast thou already witnessed their action, though perhaps unconsciously. They are the same forces which cause the vivification of the germ in a kernel of wheat, its gradual expansion until it causes the shell to burst, thus bringing into existence a new plant, and providing for its subsequent growth and future fructification. It is the same mysterious

force that summons into activity and focalizes the vital energy of the mother to bring into existence her cherished but unborn babe. And, similarly, the end of every cycle of time brings in its train a series of potential occult forces, promoting the evolution and strengthening the growth of all good seeking expression, of all rights clamoring for recognition, and demanding enactment. By the aid only of the powerful stimulus afforded by these occult forces, can a general social reformation become possible.

"But, dear brethren," continued Gaspar, his face assuming an expression of still greater solemnity, "these social upheavals are always accompanied with great dangers, as you are well aware, and it becomes our special duty to evoke against such dangers all the powers of our brotherhood. Our brethren must be enlightened as to their nature, learn to detect their presence, and realize their import, at the moment they become manifest.

"The birth of the new era, which will assert and secure the rights of man, and permit him to live in peace and harmony with his fellow man, as he will live in peace and harmony with his God, must of necessity come to pass. This birth will be accompanied with the throes and agonies inseparable from all births; the mother-country will suffer, intensely perhaps, but these sufferings are but the forerunners of a new existence, and should be confined to

material interests, the displacement or readjustment of which will necessarily be keenly felt. No plundering, no bloodshed is required to bring into existence the new order of things; and the intrusion of spoilers would counteract the beneficence of the occult forces, which the end of this century and cycle will put in action. We realize, however, that it is almost unreasonable to hope that the coming revolution will be entirely a peaceful one, or that its consummation will be accomplished without bloodshed; but what we also realize, and what we know from a thorough search into the occult laws which control the birth of cycles, is, that man—the educated, the religious man—can so mitigate the severity of the social shock, so assuage the anger and vindictiveness of the parties concerned, that the birth-throes, contracted into a period of short duration, will result in causing the rights of the people to become fully recognized, and the enactment of just laws for their protection to be immediately inaugurated, thus opening the era of peace and happiness.

"And now, dear brethren, it behooves me to explain what should be not only the attitude of religion, but its supreme duty during and before the advent of these upheavals. Religion must stand by the country and aid her during her throes, as the good doctor stands by the side of the mother, aiding and encouraging her in the hour of her severe

trial, and enjoining order and quiet to be maintained in the household. But this support cannot be effectively given until the various religious bodies are in harmony with themselves, and thereby gain the respect of the people. For assuredly, and mark this well," said the Magus, with much earnestness, "those sects which may have been unable to elevate themselves to that plane of tolerance where respect is felt for other religious bodies, thus showing that their professed love of God is but a cloak of disguise, foul within, worn by love of self—these sects will surely be blotted out of existence by the anger of the people.

"Moreover, after the birth of a cycle, as at the birth of a human being, there will be present the placenta, and in this social placenta will be found the uncharitableness to-day so openly displayed toward each other by the religious followers of different creeds, as well as by the members themselves of individual denominations, in which even the heart-felt love of God has been powerless to generate a spirit of forbearance and affection toward their fellow creatures.

"For man, realizing that these religious bodies have ceaselessly propounded doctrines tending to make him forget his natural rights in this world, preaching forgiveness toward those who have mercilessly trampled him under foot and robbed him of his earthly inheritance, while holding out as a reward for his peaceful submission

priceless treasures to be enjoyed after death to the end of time. Man, fully realizing the hollowness of such promises, will sweep these sects into oblivion, if, during the birth-throes of the new cycle, they do not undergo a change of heart, but refuse to come to his rescue in his time of need, by stretching forth a helping hand for the emancipation of poor, suffering humanity. We are not without hope, however, that the steady growth of man's intellect, with a corresponding development of his spiritual being, will, in the near future, cause the nobler followers of each creed, church, or sect, to realize that all religious communities are but bands of pilgrims, whose steps are directed alike toward the unknown Mecca, the home of everlasting bliss; that the differences between them consist merely in the choice of the roads leading thereto, each persuasion at present harboring a deep-rooted conviction that its own is the safest and most direct.

"When the religious bodies have progressed thus far, then will the salvation of society rest in their hands; then will men lovingly recognize them as worthy leaders, and with them take counsel; then will they, and they alone, be able to keep the masses under control, to lead them onward to their higher destiny, to bring on earth the era of peace and good-will destined to prelude the millennial reign. Therein lies the grand consummation, the sacred duty of prepara-

tion for it, resting with the various religious bodies. To this end their best and most powerful forces should be concentrated, should be utilized with the utmost vigor and determination. Nor can such efforts fail to be effectual, inasmuch as the masses always yield ready obeisance to religious leaders who have gained their respect and confidence.

"In the hands of the regenerated religious bodies, then, lies the successful birth of the new cycle; let them prepare to become faithful servants of God by first becoming faithful leaders of men. Hence, toward the elevation and harmonization of the divers religious creeds should your most earnest efforts now tend."

Brother Angelo and the two other Magi were deeply impressed with the profound intuitive knowledge of Gaspar. Perceiving him to be in a highly supersensuous condition, Balthazar, the Egyptian Magus, availed himself of the opportunity, and asked him his opinion as to the actual spiritual condition of the planet Earth, and its future and final destiny.

"The destiny of our planet is similar to the destiny of all other planets, and to the destiny of all things that have existence, be they mineral, vegetable, animal, man, angel, or archangel. That destiny is spiritualization, or a gradual return to God or Parabrahm, through the ever-ascending processes of evolution. All things in the Universe,

from the indivisible atom to the most Titanic system of worlds, are co-related and inter-dependent, inter-solidary, and mutually reciprocal. The planets and all things, and all existing entities upon them, are especially so; progress in one series of beings produces progress in another; retrogression in one generation retards advancement in the following one. But, as the Omnipotent has decreed in the breathing forth of the divine Word, the proclaiming of the mystic fiat, that all things in the Universe must finally revert to Him, progress is the law, and that law obtains.

"True, there have been periods when, from various causes, the earth remained in an unprogressive condition, as in those epochs when heterogeneous influences were projected upon her by surrounding planets; or, later, when disturbing odic or thought-forces were introduced into her aura by human races whose lives were in utter discord with the conditions of her growth, evolution, and destiny. Under such circumstances the spiritualizing influence of the aura of Parabrahm was temporarily arrested, causing progress to be interrupted, and giving cause to terrestrial catastrophies, such as the cataclysms of the glacial epoch, which endured until the aura of the earth was purged of its mephitic element."

"Will Earth be subjected to other glacial periods in the future?" was asked.

"Not, let us hope, until the advent of the final one, caused by death, and due, as we sincerely trust, to the plenary fulfillment of her destiny, which is spiritualization. For the death of a planet may be caused also by her hopelessly diseased or degraded condition; but this happens only when her aura has become so thoroughly polluted by the selfish and bestial lives of its inhabitants as to render her evolution and the consequent fulfillment of her destiny an utter impossibility.

"It is nevertheless true that mephitic aura is constantly being introduced into Earth's spiritual atmosphere by millions of people whose every thought is bent on the acquisition of earthly possessions, many of them consciously violating every moral law that stands in the way of self-aggrandizement. Moreover, the sufferings of the poorer classes add immeasureably to this dark, pernicious aura, owing to the feeling of hatred felt for their oppressors. Most detrimental of all, however, are those baneful vibrations cast into the earth's aura by the man of large intellect, by the scientist, or so-called philosopher, whose spiritual nature is dead, whose superior attainments have failed to develop any symptom of worthy aspirations, whose mind rests satisfied with the search and understanding of the laws that govern matter and fain would endow matter with infinite possibilities and potencies, denying any superior cause, and

even scoffing at the idea of a supreme consciousness. I refer to the materialists.

"Nevertheless, there is a vast region of luminous mist being developed around the earth, caused by the steady evolving of a higher grade of aura, the outcome of a loftier religious thought entertained by a large class of her inhabitants. This aura impels the mind to form ever higher ideals, and to proceed steadfastly on the path leading to their realization."

"Among all the phenomena of the present age, there is nothing more phenomenal than the achievements of man's intelligence in the realm of science, though he is as yet merely at the portal of that realm. Never was inquiry in every field of human attainment more earnest; never was search after new and higher truths more unremitting. But when, reaching the farthest limit of research, the investigator is confronted with the limitless vista of the beyond, fain must he confess his impotence and insignificance, must regard himself as but a child gathering the shells that lie scattered here and there by the side of the pathless and untrodden sea. Then it is that, as a true child of God, whether scientist or philosopher, far from becoming discouraged, he lifts a confident eye toward the blue expanse above, and, with bosom heaving with hope and faith, looks upward for the solution of the mysterious questions that lie unsolved before him, henceforth trusting to inspira-

tion for guidance. Ever restless in mind, he continues to ask 'Whither?' But with heart full of reverence, and steadfast in purpose to know, he still pursues his investigation into the mysterious realm of nature.

"Surely, these bright constellations, fretting the firmament by night, reveal to him their common origin and common destiny. The offspring of cometary vapor, they grow into bright suns, the parents of solid planets whose functions are to give life to material beings in ever-ascending series with the sad destiny, alas! as it seemed to him, of being finally cast, race after race, no matter how worthy, into the mysterious void of eternity. This appalling duty fulfilled, the planets themselves he knows must die and crumble into dust.

"Our known Universe he considers to be not unlike a gigantic panorama, rapidly displayed before some super-celestial spectator, constantly unfolding new scenes of birth, life, and death. On one scroll is represented the transformation of the mineral and vegetable substances, of fish, fowl, animal and man; on another, the evolution of nebulæ, comets, stars, clusters, systems, galaxies, suns, planets, each receiving birth, and proceeding through youth, maturity, and old age, to decay and death. To what purpose is all this, he asks, with heart growing faint. Why that vast universal graveyard with its innumerable tombs always

replenished, yet always unsated? Vividly conscious, however, of the glorious harmonies presiding over all the workings and manifestations of nature, and especially of the sweet enjoyment, the perfect happiness and peace bequeathed to him whose activities are in conformity with the onward and upward law, with eye uplifted, heart pulsating, and with infinite trust, hope, and faith, he sends forth to the mysterious Author of all things, whom he recognizes by His works as infinitely good and great, an ardent aspiration after knowledge and truth. And, as aspiration begets inspiration (for such is the law), he presently receives the supreme reward—gradual insight into things spiritual—until finally in him is vested the greatest of all celestial endowments, the gift of the Holy Ghost, bringing him nearer and nearer to Parabrahm, to the Godhead, in his purest essence."

Thus Gaspar spoke with voice deeply solemn, with such accents of spiritual love, that his hearers stood as though transfixed. Meanwhile his body, rising gradually to the height of the altar, had become transparent; and from his brain proceeded golden radiations of heavenly light. During his discourse the celestial choir continued to give forth subdued and soul-entrancing melodies, the vibration of which added a still more brilliant luster to the spiritual illumination of the Magus.

For a moment Gaspar paused, as if expecting a question from one of the brethren, and with eyes turned upward seemed longingly to await the summons to his heavenly home. Interpreting his thoughts, Melchior asked of him an exposition of the doctrine of reincarnation, and whether in his experience that doctrine—so vividly discussed at the present day—was founded on truth.

"Yes, reincarnation is true," he replied, "and its law operates, first, on every human being whose soul has not entered the state of self-consciousness; secondly, on those having entered that state who yield to the powerful and ever-recurring attractions of earth, which often control every thought and action in the life of the individual. In both instances man is of the earth, earthy. His ambitions and desires center in self. He cherishes no hopes, aspires to no higher state of existence, but leaves earth with regret, and fain to earth would he return.

"In such condition of life man constantly gathers unto himself elements for a reincarnation, thus illustrating the saying of one of our order, that 'man is the architect of his own destiny.' After death he will assuredly enter a new body and return to earth as soon as the odic and planetary influences permit him so to do.

"When, however, man has acquired spiritual consciousness; when, with eyes uplifted, he sends forth heart-felt supplications

to the Heavenly Father—not prayers for the granting of some personal favor, but earnest petitions for more spiritual light; when, realizing the omnipotence and omnipresence of the Almighty, he yearns for a more exalted condition of existence, prays for the deliverance from the miseries of this life, and from the obstructions to spiritual growth pertaining to earth, then will the soul, imbued with such aspirations, no longer have to pass through the ordeal of reincarnation; never again will it return to flesh and blood. Though reembodied, the body that it will put on will be a spiritual one, and this process of reembodiment will be repeated through all the eons of eternity, every spiritual body being succeeded by a more brilliant one as the soul progresses through higher stages of being, ever gaining new experiences, acquiring greater knowledge, increasing steadily in purity and goodness, until, finally, it becomes worthy of alliance with the Infinite Spirit that governs the Universe.

"But never, even thus exalted, does the soul become absorbed and lost in the infinitude of God or Parabrahm. No; for through a long series of earthly reincarnations and spiritual reembodiments, having mastered all the sciences, material and occult, and acquired infinite experiences through spiritual divine illumination, it has of itself approached to omniscience. Through its own long-fought battles against the lower forces

over which it has gained a supreme victory, the soul has unfolded the 'Divine Will,' which, together with the nearly-acquired omniscience, endows it with qualities bordering on omnipotence. And now the soul, being thus found worthy, is received into the bosom of the Supreme Ruler of all things, and assuredly it does not there lose its individual consciousness, but becomes possessed in its own domain, in its own individual right, of omniscience and omnipotence. Thus deified by means of its own struggles, its own hard-won victories, it is not robbed by the ever just God of its rightful possessions; but, being one with Him in all that is, is joined with Him, dwells in Him, and enjoys with Him forevermore the prerogatives and attributes possessed by Divinity itself. Such is the reward of a soul exalted into a purely spiritual condition.

"I am aware, however," continued Gaspar, after a moment passed in profound meditation, "that reincarnation, rebirth in the flesh upon this earth, is believed in India, as my brother Melchior well knows, to take place innumerable times in the life of man, whether debased or highly spiritualized; and, indeed, the majority of the people there, living, as they do, on a low or animal plane, are subjected many times to this process; but the true disciples of Buddha, although believing in reincarnation — a belief transmitted to them by religious dog-

mas, the origin of which is lost in the night of time—discover, when translated through death, that the incumbrance of a new earthly body would only retard their evolution, and, rather than return to earth, prefer to work out in the realm of spirit their spiritual development.

"And now, my beloved brethren and worthy successor, I am about to leave you. Be steadfast in your duty; falter not. In the coming events which will prove so momentous in the history of this planet, you must play a most important part. Your responsibility is great, but your powers are greater. You are the spiritual guides, the generals in command, of the great army of God, and your first endeavors must be directed toward the ministers and leaders of the religious creeds. They must be counseled and directed to establish harmony among themselves, and then to focalize their combined strength for the relief of the distressed and disinherited classes of humanity. By so doing, these classes, which constitute the basis of all revolutions, recognizing as their best and truest friends the ministers of religion, will follow them as disciples, and with them, in the holy name of God, demand their social recognition, their social rights; and God will lead these people, as in olden days he led the children of Israel, unto victory.

"I must add, however," continued Gaspar, with all the solemnity of which his

failing voice was capable, "that when this universal revolution shall take place, the religious creeds will be accorded their final opportunity. If among themselves they do not join hands, and, with united effort, aid the people in their just endeavors for emancipation, the divers religions, as now professed, will be swept from the face of the earth as worthless institutions, useless alike to God and man. In such an event, the demon of materialism will enjoy a long and uninterrupted reign. This is one of the greatest calamities that could befall the nations of earth, and to you, more than all others, belongs the power to prevent it.

"And now, farewell, my brethren, and may the blessing of the Heavenly Father attend you; may His peace be with you; may you be inspired with all knowledge and wisdom to direct His children into the path that leads into life everlasting, even as you have yourselves been directed. Once more, farewell, until we meet in the realm of eternal bliss, never again to be parted. My spirit goes unto Him that gave it."

While pronouncing this solemn benediction, the form of Gaspar gradually arose above the altar, his hands uplifted in prayer, and his eyes radiant with the rapture of unspeakable joy. Around him hovered the angelic choir, with outstretched wings moving in unison with their celestial harmony, their melody as that of the sera-

phim. Slowly his form ascended until, high in the expanse of the firmament, lustrous as a shining star, it disappeared in a golden cloud of dazzling glory.

Thus passed from earth the Magus, translated to the kingdom of his Heavenly Father, as one whose purity of soul, unblemished by worldly pollution, had fitted him to stand in the very presence of the Eternal.

Silently and with dejected mien, Balthazar and Melchior withdrew from the sacred precincts of the temple, where, prostrate on the steps of the altar, Angelo long remained unconscious, save of the roll of thunder and the hiss of serpents that betokened the departure of the Egyptian and Hindoo Magi.

Already the shroud of night enfolded the temple when Angelo regained his consciousness, and no light was there except for the subdued flames of the sacred fire and the radiance emitted from the shrine. Fixing his gaze on the altar, he presently realized the solemn scenes that had transpired but a few hours ago, though this interval appeared to him almost as the space of a lifetime. Still in his hands were the scrolls of papyrus presented by him who, though no longer of earth, had known not death. The door of the shrine was yet open, and there in a golden box, near the consecrated oil and the emblems of the office of Magus, he deposited the sacred documents.

This done, he knelt in prayer, and on rising to his feet, perceived standing beside him the attendant Ralph, who said, as he made a low obeisance:

"When the most Worshipful Master shall wish to divest himself of the vestments of his office, I will lead him to the sacred cabinet."

"I will follow you at once," answered Angelo.

Guided by the novitiate, the Archbishop passed into a room in the rear of the tabernacle, whence, by pressing a hidden spring, a door was opened leading into a small chamber divided by a wooden partition from the Sanctuary. There Angelo divested himself of his robes, carefully placing his golden crown in a casket of sweet-scented wood fashioned for the purpose. Here also were the garments which he had left in his apartments, and after donning his usual attire he rejoined the attendant who, handing to him a large sealed envelope, said:

"My Master, before leaving us, gave this to me, instructing me to deliver it to you at the fitting moment."

On breaking the seal, Angelo drew forth a document somewhat in the form of a will, wherein was bequeathed to him the mansion in which the Sanctuary was located, to be kept in trust for the order and transmitted to his successor. It was also requested that he should adopt the novitiate Ralph, who was the scion of one of the Masters, and well

worthy of his noble origin. To him the Archbishop at once extended his hand, which Ralph, on bended knee, pressed to his lips with sincere emotion. The newly-made Magus now retired to his apartments and passed a night replete with rest.

CHAPTER V.

No sooner had the Archbishop returned to Liège, and to the duties of his episcopate, than he received a letter from the Cardinal-Secretary of the Pope, enjoining him to repair to Rome without delay. A week later found him in the Vatican, where apartments were assigned him adjoining the library. Here, in dejected mood—for well he knew that the citation had been issued in no friendly spirit—he awaited the summons of His Holiness.

A generation had passed away since Angelo, renouncing the world with its hollow mockeries, its gaudy pageantries, its sensual depravity, had first set foot within the walls of Rome. And now once more he gazed on the Eternal City, where yet lower depths of debasement mingled with the fast-waning grandeur of the papacy.

As Angelo's train of thought drifted more and more into philosophic fields, he reflected that the infancy of civilizations, like that of individuals, is followed by youth with its passions and selfishness, by manhood with its development of intellect, its scientific and philosophic research, and finally by old age, when fruition takes place, and life is given to riper thought and spirituality. He recog-

nized that Rome had passed through all these stages. The barbaric splendor of its youth had been replaced by an era of science, art, and philosophy, inquiring critically into all sources of human knowledge, and soon, like every other civilized community, must enter on the period of fruition, on an era of spiritual enlightenment. True spiritualization, he was now convinced, could never originate in the Roman Catholic church as it exists to-day; this church must first undergo a radical change; in a word, the Catholic church must no longer be Roman, but become, as it were, a federation, each country possessing its own responsible head. Thus would the fundamental articles of belief be gradually harmonized with science, and become its handmaiden in the service of God.

While thus absorbed, Angelo was informed that His Holiness awaited him, and a moment later he was ushered into the presence of the Sovereign Pontiff. After the customary greetings, the Pope thus addressed the Archbishop, whom, for an instant, he regarded with stern and inquisitive gaze.

"It has been reported to the Vatican that, while in India, you have joined the Himalayan Brotherhood, have been invested by them with the robes and the insignia of the three degrees of their order. Is this true, Archbishop Angelo?"

"It is, your Holiness."

"It has also been reported that you have recently assumed the robes and insignia of a mystic order in England, and that they have been placed upon you by a Protestant."

"It is most true that I have been invested with the insignia of a sacred office in England, but he who bestowed them upon me is far above the professions and dogmas of sect or creed."

"Far above the professions of creed; of the Catholic, also, I presume you would say?"

"Yes, your Holiness," answered Angelo, firmly, but respectfully.

"Very well, sir," exclaimed the Pope, barely able to repress an outburst of anger, "hand over to me the insignia of your office as Archbishop."

Slowly and with dignity Angelo divested himself of the pallium and handed it to the Supreme Pontiff, who thus dismissed him from his presence:

"You are a Prince of the royal blood of France, and for that reason only I give you a last chance to renounce the evils of your way. Retire to the library, and there read the lives of Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas. To-morrow we will decide upon your fate."

Conducted to the library by an attendant, the Magus—Archbishop no longer—for many hours gave way to profound and sorrowful meditation on the event which had just transpired. With a soul intensely de-

votional, he suffered unutterable agony at the thought of being thus deprived of his sacred functions, soon, perhaps, to be pronounced anathema, and expelled from that church which had bestowed on him one of the highest dignities within its gift, which had placed him on the upward path to a consecrated and spiritual life. He realized, however, that the course he had followed was the right one, and approved in its entirety by his conscience and inner sense of right.

"Come what may," he said to himself, "I must follow the dictates of my own convictions."

Turning his eyes toward the immense shelves of the library, heavily laden with innumerable tomes, and to the many glass cases filled with ancient documents, he thus soliloquized:

"These rooms are the custodians of the oldest historical records of all those peoples on earth in whose countries a missionary has chanced to set foot. All the learning of the world is herein contained. On these shelves and in these cases can be found, as nowhere else, the true records of the evolution of the brain of man, religious and intellectual; its growth and decline, through the beautiful period of nascent Christianity, the horrible years of the Spanish inquisition, and later of the profound diplomatic achievements of the Popes in succession. In some obscure recess are also hidden the

only authentic papyri that record in writing the most secret and sacred occult knowledge professed by the Egyptian High Priests of old and the Hierophants of our order. These papyri have now become useless to the Popes of Rome, and ought, it seems to me, to be restored to our order."

At this moment the clock struck the hour of midnight, and, as its note died away, the library became illumined with that golden light, the radiance of which he knew so well. Turning to discover whence it came, he saw, to his utter astonishment, a large glass case filled with ponderous tomes move slowly away from the wall at the touch of some mysterious power, disclosing a niche containing rolls of ancient papyri. Angelo was possessed with an uncontrollable impulse to learn the secrets of these venerable documents, and took them from the case with the intention of replacing them after a cursory examination of their contents. Turning round to resume his seat, he was rooted to the spot on which he stood, at seeing before him, in an open door, His Holiness the Pope, watching him with eyes aflame with anger.

"Now," said the Pontiff, "have I beheld with my own eyes the finger of Satan working through the infernal agency of thy demoniacal powers. In order to further thy accursed arts, thou didst intend to steal these papyri which were handed to me by my predecessors, and to them by one of the

magicians of Egypt. I had come to hold friendly converse with thee, hoping that I might induce thee to renounce thy evil ways. Leave this palace forthwith; return home and rejoin thy Himalayan jugglers and thy Protestant occultists. Go, and may the curse——"

With hands extended toward Angelo, who stood as one transfixed, the Pope was about to pronounce him anathema, when suddenly a blinding flash of lightning filled the room, and a terrific crash of thunder shook the building from roof to foundation. Then appeared before them a being of radiant brightness, whom Angelo instantly recognized as Balthazar, the Magus of Egypt. With one stroke of his hand Balthazar lowered the arms of the Pope, whom, sternly regarding, he thus accosted:

"Thou who art styled the Holy Father, recall thy curse; it is unworthy of thee; for blessing alone should thy hands be extended, even as were those of Him whose steps thou dost pretend to follow. I am Balthazar, the Egyptian Magus, successor to him who intrusted these papyri to a distant predecessor of thine, a holy and most worthy Pontiff. The documents are sacred, and destined to enhance the spiritual evolution of man, containing instructions for the head of the Church of God upon earth, how best to aid this process of evolution. From many of these instructions the Romish church has departed, and hence to

that church they have become useless. My brother, here present, is Gaspar, the recently appointed Magus of Europe; he is chosen of God, and has been lawfully anointed. To him these documents henceforth belong, and to him shalt thou make obeisance."

Balthazar spoke with all the dignity of a monarch, and, as his words were ended, the Supreme Pontiff, utterly bewildered, bowed low before the Magus—Angelo, with tears in his eyes, returning the salutation. Pale as death, and with faltering steps, the Pope returned to his apartments. Thereupon, with an affectionate greeting to Angelo—now Gaspar—Balthazar disappeared, and on the following day the former set forth for Liège, bearing with him the sacred papyri.

A few weeks after this occurrence, the Archi-episcopal palace of Liège was closed. The Prince-Archbishop Angelo, now Magus Gaspar, had mysteriously disappeared therefrom, and a new Archbishop had been appointed by Rome. The newly elected Prelate informed all questioners that his predecessor, Angelo, had been sent by the Holy See on a secret mission across the seas, whither nobody knew but the Pope himself, he added, mysteriously. By this frank avowal all inquiries stopped, and wonderment ceased. The fact is, however, that His Holiness was entirely ignorant of the whereabouts of the Archbishop; indeed, was well contented at his departure, and secretly hoped with much confidence

that he would never appear again in the Catholic world, and that the dramatic scene which took place in the Vatican library would thus forever remain unrevealed.

CHAPTER VI.

YEARS, many in number, have elapsed since the scene in the Vatican library occurred. We find Archbishop Angelo, or Magus Gaspar, installed in a sumptuous apartment situated in the most fashionable thoroughfare of one of the large cities near the Atlantic coast in North America. Very old, indeed, does he appear at this time, but no signs of decrepitude could be detected in his features, the brightness of his eyes testifying to the unimpaired vigor of his intellect. His was a venerable face, every line denoting supreme goodness and spirituality. His broad forehead, framed with silvery locks, indicated a gigantic intellect, and the entire physiognomy, overspread with that sweet, calm, loving expression, was eminently characteristic of the noble child of Parabrahm.

He was examining with deep interest a large roll of paper of strange form and appearance, seemingly yellowed by age, the leaves being covered with unknown writing, the characters of which appeared like those of hieroglyphics.

"For years," mused the Magus, "have I been occupied in deciphering this extraordinary document, kept so long and so unprof-

itably in the library of the Roman Vatican, and so carefully concealed in that hidden niche. At last I have discovered the key to its translation and mastered the secret of its contents, learning the great import to the world, alike to the scientist and to the earnest student of religion.

"And now must I find a successor to whom to transmit these papyri, and explain their contents. A highly intellectual and scientific man must he be, and of a thoroughly spiritual nature. In preparation for my search I have fasted and prayed. To-morrow at high noon I set out on the spiritual journey. May Parabrahm grant me guidance."

The next day at twelve, Gaspar retired to the inner chamber of his apartments, giving orders that no one should be admitted. After fervent supplication to Parabrahm, that he might be successful in this most important mission of his life—the finding of a man worthy of occupying, after due preparation, the sacred office of Magus—he slowly clad himself in the vestments and insignia of his holy office. He devotedly kissed the talisman, and, having blessed the golden crown before placing it upon his head, he seated himself in a chair, and, leaning back with arms crossed upon his breast, he closed his eyelids and in low tones uttered a mystic invocation.

By degrees, the small chamber became filled with golden radiance, ever gaining in

brightness until a dazzling brilliancy rendered the body of the Magus invisible, and in its place appeared the likeness of a great star.

Not in his natural body, however, did he travel, nor yet in his astral form; it was consciousness, far-reaching spirit-consciousness, one of the transcendental attributes pertaining to the sacred functions of Magus, that enabled him to conduct his search. This consciousness, ascending to the highest radiation of the spirit-zone belonging to earth, permitted him to observe and examine with close attention the vibratory waves sent up from humanity below, caused by prayer, aspiration, spiritual endeavors of whatever nature, and urgent appeals to the Divinity. Many of these currents of vibration, rising to different altitudes in the zone, did he carefully regard, and of one he took especial cognizance, its appearance being exceptionally striking. To his supernatural sight, undimmed by the clouds of materiality, it presented a shaft of intense golden light, interspersed with turquoise-colored radiations, reaching high into the spirit zone, and exceeding in dimensions that of any other ray. Following this ray of gold and blue, which denoted a high degree of spirituality and intellect, Gaspar found it to proceed from a group of three men, wearing apparently the clerical garb, assembled in the library of a plain but substantially built house situated in a large metropolis of the

Atlantic coast of America. With the deepest interest the Magus examined the physical and physiognomical qualities of these personages.

Each was a noble type of manhood; tall, handsome, and of imposing presence, of aspect proud, intellectual, and self-contained, and with countenance overspread with, or rather illumined by, the tinge of mysticism which results from deep and prolonged spiritual meditation. All three were regularly ordained priests of the Roman Catholic church, American born, and American in sympathy. One was a Jesuit; the second was the rector of a prominent New York parish, and the third, a member of a religious order of high repute.

The Jesuit was in the act of offering a fervent prayer to the Infinite Father, asking for divine guidance, inspiration, and wisdom, in the deliberations about to be held. His supplication ended, he thus addressed his confrères:

"We have here assembled, my brethren, in the interest, as we believe, of true religion, of a religion acceptable to humanity at large, and aiming to open a true path to the kingdom of God, as well as to promote the worldly welfare of his creature, man. The day has come when man can no longer intrust the salvation of his soul to another's *ipse dixit*, be he priest, minister, or even Pope. Faith, although an indispensable basis of salvation, being now-a-days often

perverted into blind trust, has ceased to be its only basis. Knowledge longs for recognition, and understanding clamors for a hearing. The American people demand a religion that appeals to the intellect as well as to the heart; one that shall recognize the legitimate claims of science and philosophy, and welcome these as worthy helpmates in the work of man's salvation, terrestrial as well as celestial. If the destiny of man be to develop from the animal up to the Godhead, through a series of evolutionary transformations, true religion is the way and the means to effect such a growth. Man's consciousness of his relationship to the Supreme Being begets faith. Philosophy, or intellectual inquiry into the conditions of such relationship, develops understanding, and science, opening its rich storehouses replete with proofs of the grandeur, beauty, and harmony of the Universe, transforms such understanding into positive knowledge.

"Man, being born in ignorance, can arrive at the true knowledge of his destiny and the duties pertaining to its fulfillment, only through a gradual apprehension of the laws and destiny of the Universe of which he is a part, and in which he moves and has his being. Science alone is able to reveal to him those laws, and philosophy, giving homogeneity to established facts, proclaims the harmony and wisdom that preside over the force governing God's entire Universe.

How, then, can science be fairly considered as antagonistic to true religion?"

Here the Jesuit father's face betrayed the emotion of his soul.

"Many passing years," he continued, "have witnessed my earnest labors in the scientific laboratory of our college; by day studying the physical sciences which explain the harmony and relation existing between the natural forces of the Universe of matter, the analysis of matter and the evolutionary laws indicating its destiny; by night, with eye at the telescope, I have never wearied of scanning the heavens, or of communing with their brilliant hosts, those creations of the Infinite whose destiny, even as our own, is forever upward. Oh, my brethren, the comprehension of the sublime synthesis of our Universe was forced upon me as by a ray of inspiration, the origin of which could not be otherwise than divine, and which showed, to my mind, that the destiny of all things is upward, through ever ascending transformations until, purified and resplendent, they return to the bosom of the Heavenly Father."

A vivid glow had now overspread the countenance of the priest, who, after a moment's pause, resumed:

"Yes, science proves that our planet Earth had its origin eons ago, and that man, even man, has existed upon it for more than six hundred centuries; aye!

strong indications going to show that he may have been in existence half a million years ago. And yet these discoveries of science, these facts which it has demonstrated to be true, are in direct opposition to the doctrines promulgated by Rome, and imposed upon us as articles of belief whose verity must not for a moment be questioned. For many years this antagonism has brought sadness to my soul, a sadness almost beyond endurance. That the agonies of my conscience might be stilled, prayer after prayer did I send up to heaven, beseeching the Infinite Father to harmonize the discoveries of science with the dogmas of Rome; but without avail.

"At length came an answer. It was in the stillness of a summer night, in the hours when silence has a voice that is heard by the soul. With eye directed through my telescope, trying as ever to pierce the star-depths in their immeasurable distances, I sat musing over the splendors of the firmament. Suns, stars, planets, comets, star-clusters, galaxies, and nebulæ, the whole brilliant panorama of the heavens moving in endless procession, was unrolled before me, and my heart, enraptured with the beauty and grandeur of God's handiwork, ascended to him in profoundest adoration. With head bowed low I offered up this supplication from the inmost depths of my being: 'My Heavenly Father, may it please Thee to enlighten my understanding

and let me know if this ceaseless universal motion of the celestial bodies, this ever-changing and constant journeying onward of all things that exist, is the mysterious journey of the Universe on its return to Thee?' And a voice, distinctly audible, responded:

"'Yes, my beloved son. Inspiration has revealed to thee the truth, and may thou abide by the voice that speaketh within thee.'

"Then and there, my brethren, did I lay out the path which I now follow, and still propose to follow. If science is right and Rome is wrong, and if my conscience emphatically so dictates to my consciousness; if, furthermore, it continues so to do after prayer, fasting, and penance, then will I follow its admonitions, whatever may be the consequences. I am, moreover, a free-born American, free to think and to speak that which I believe to be the truth, and fealty to myself and to my highest realization of truth is my first and most sacred duty. Free, also, I purpose to be in all my actions, no less than in thought and speech."

The latter part of the Jesuit father's address was uttered with deep solemnity, his accents betraying the magnitude of the struggle through which his soul had passed. While listening to him, the features of his associates betrayed emotions no less profound. His ardent love of science, and of the momentous truths which science re-

veals; his enthusiasm at the discovery of the laws which control the Universe; his realization of the harmony and unvarying consistency of these laws, and especially of the sublime law of evolution, constantly impelling upward everything that is—all these feelings, filling his soul with a maelstrom of emotion, shed their influence over them, and stamped on their souls the convictions which had grown upon and absorbed his own.

A period of silence followed, during which all three seemed absorbed in deep and solemn thought.

Presently the parish priest and the friar said, almost in the same breath:

"The noble father is right. May his soul be true to the light it receives from God; may his life be in accord with his belief, understanding, and knowledge, regardless of all the strictures of church or society. God is higher than man; God is higher than the Pope of Rome." These latter words were uttered with firmness, yet not without a feeling of awe.

Upon hearing this emphatic expression of approval, the face of the Jesuit father became for a moment illumined. Directing heavenward his eyes, beaming with a spiritual expression, he exclaimed:

"Blessed be the Lord of eternal truth, and blessed be you, my brethren."

Thus saying he arose, and, taking in his hands those of his companions, continued:

"Henceforth may I hope not to tread alone the rugged path of the spiritual life as exemplified by fealty to true religious conviction and to the noblest attributes of manhood."

The member of the religious society now spoke. Tall and well proportioned, though somewhat slight in figure, he displayed in his features the true American type. His long, pale face was surmounted by a lofty and massive forehead, beneath which large, soft brown eyes shone with lustrous self-inspective gaze derived from the inward concentration of thought during long years of meditation on spiritual things. He was, in truth, a striking personage, the very image of the ancient mystic, with face changeless as that of a statue, yet one which a beautiful idea would suddenly illumine with an expression almost divine.

"During my long career as priest and confessor of various religious orders," he said, "I have met with experiences at once depressing and consoling. While it is true that in some instances the causes which move some persons to enter our cloisters are merely the incapacity or disinclination to battle with the world, and that others of nervous, impressionable temperaments have been influenced only by a momentary exaltation of their religious feelings; yet, in the majority of cases, those who have been admitted into our austere religious fraternities have joined their respective societies with a

real, decided, and well-considered purpose of working out therein—as being the only places in which they deemed it possible to do so—their highest conceivable ideal of existence, devoting their entire life, their every thought and act, to the service of the Heavenly Father. Of this class, many develop into the real children of God, true mystics or *illuminati*.

"In our order, and, I may truly say, in all the orders of the Roman Catholic church, the life of its members is that of an ascetic. Absolute chastity, obedience to the rules of a stringent discipline which has for its object the control and repression of the senses, constant prayer, interrupted only by periods of deep meditation on things divine, cannot fail, in those rightly disposed, to bring forth spiritual insight or true apprehension of things eternal. But, alas!" (and here the speaker's countenance was overspread with a tinge of sadness) "there are many whose lives are being made a continual sacrifice, who are being sinned against in a most unpardonable fashion, whose reason even is endangered, and, what is even worse, whose soul-growth is constantly being repressed. A sad instance of this has lately occurred in our cloister. A brother, and a most devout one, fell, at intervals and for days at a time, into a state of abstraction, during which he would neither eat nor drink nor sleep, but steadily remained in kneeling posture, with clasped hands and upturned eyes, be-

fore his prayer-desk, and wearing such an expression of facial transfiguration, that tears of joy, not unmixed with anxiety, would flow from the eyes of all who beheld him.

"During these periods of ecstatic rapture he often spoke as if he were a visitant from regions far above earth. He professed to have witnessed, for instance, the formation of worlds, their origin, growth, decadence, and death. His discourses were eloquent and lofty, and he gave utterance to truths so divine that gradually the brethren began to look upon him as a superior being, a favored son of the Almighty, one intrusted with the mission of infusing a new spiritual life into the order, and, eventually, of becoming its Superior, to guide it into spiritual destinies far beyond human conception.

"One night, about a year ago—it was Good Friday, as I well remember—this sainted brother, while pondering over the life of our Saviour, slowly entered, as it seemed, a state of physical unconsciousness, and commenced to discourse upon the life of Christ, setting forth in solemn and musical tones the mystic doctrine of renunciation, or the subjugation of the outer self for the benefit of the real, or inner self; a renunciation of all that is temporal, in order to foster that which pertains to the life eternal. He depicted in glowing terms the ideal life of the true man—his abnegation, his spiritual endeavors, his constant striv-

ing for upward growth, and his gradual approach to that state of supreme consciousness where man becomes more than man, becomes almost one with God; when, having completely mastered self, he may lead a life sublime in its perfect purity and sanctification. For him thereafter earth no longer possesses attractions; the allurements of the senses are disregarded, and, free and unfettered, he may ascend, as in a halo of glory, direct to the throne of God.

"When the brother had thus described the phases of the most spiritual life attainable on earth, he entered upon a theme whose grandeur and sublimity were almost beyond the ken of human comprehension. He spoke of the Universe, its beauty, its forces, and their co-ordination and co-relation; of suns and sun-clusters, of stars and star-clusters, and of all the heavenly bodies, discoursing at length on the purpose of their creation, and the final destiny of each and all. Finally he dwelt on evolution, much in the same strain as did our brother a moment ago, explaining the ever upward course of all things in existence, describing the birth of our own planet millions of years in the past, and elucidating the different stages through which it came to be the habitation of man.

"His discourse, forcible and majestic in tone, was such as if truth personified were giving utterance to his words. It proclaimed

a system of cosmogony most rational, and yet most sublime; one which the soul of those present absorbed as the plant of the desert absorbs the drops of dew deposited upon its parched and thirsting leaves.

"At its conclusion, all of us realized that we were the better for having heard it, and felt that we had received, as it were, a new baptism. We did not, however, retire that night without a shade of anxiety in our hearts, for well we knew that many things spoken by the brother were in direct conflict with the theory of creation and the system of cosmogony set forth and dictated by the Romish church. Nevertheless, we knew, as by intuition, that from the brother's lips had come the truth.

"As we expected, rumors were presently carried to Rome of the inspired utterances of our brother, and in due time the Secretary of the Holy See asked for precise information as to the doctrines and theories advanced by him, especially in his later discourse. In answer, a detailed statement was forwarded, and recently an order was received from Rome for the incarceration of the gifted brother until he should be willing to make a full retractation of every principle he had at any time promulgated, by tongue or pen, in opposition to the tenets of the church of Rome.

"Our brother was accused of being possessed by the demon of personal ambition, was stigmatized as a heretic, and threatened

with the thunders of the church should he fail to recant.

"Prayers were ordered with Masses for the salvation of his soul, to be continued for the space of nine days; after which the Superior, or Abbot, was directed to bring him before the members of the cloisters in full assembly, there to bid him retract the heresies he had proclaimed and profess sincere repentance. The papal dispatch also intimated that the accused might prove to be insane, in which case it would be advisable to remove him to some cloister in Italy, where he might be cared for until reason should be restored.

"In presence of the assembled friars the orders from Rome were communicated to our brother, on whom the blow fell unawares and with a shock that laid him prostrate on the floor. Soon, however, he rallied, and casting to heaven a look of divine serenity, answered gently, but with firmness:

"'Do with your servant as seemeth best; neither have I spoken nor written aught but the truth, as vouchsafed unto me by the Infinite Father of truth.'

"Thereupon, in obedience to the instructions of the Papal See, he was led to the prison of the cloister.

"For nine days Masses were celebrated and prayers offered in behalf of our brother. But no prayer, I can assure you, passed our lips that was not breathed in entire sympa-

thy with him. We besought the Infinite Father to strengthen him in this his hour of trial, to make him steadfast in his allegiance to the truth, to grant him wisdom and understanding to discern the truth, and to give it utterance, whatsoever he might find it to be. As the time assigned for his recantation approached, every heart in the cloister beat faster, and, though none of the brethren spoke a word, the anxious look on every face betokened the sentiments that filled their souls.

"At early morn on the appointed day the Abbot commanded that all the friars should assemble in the church. After prayer the accused was brought forth, and, being conducted to the middle aisle, was ordered to kneel upon a wooden bench. All eyes were turned upon him, and few more piteous sights have been beheld by human eyes since our Saviour's death on the cross. Erect, but with a deathlike pallor, his gaze turned heavenward, and with an expression infinitely divine, our beloved brother appeared as one spiritualized even unto the portals of heaven. Arrayed in the long white robes of our order, and with the radiance of heavenly hope shining through the agony of his soul, he seemed the image of the Saviour when in the hour of his passion he was forsaken by those whom he loved.

"All eyes were moist when the Abbot, assisted by his priests, intoned the first notes of High Mass. His voice, which at first was

clear and distinct, became, by degrees, unsteady, and toward the middle of the ceremony, while chanting the opening lines of the '*Dominus Vobiscum*,' as he beheld the supreme expression of glory and grace which illumined the countenance of the persecuted brother, he broke down utterly and continued the service in low and faltering tones.

"And now, after the consecration of the host, the Abbot had to put the fatal question formulated by Rome: 'Do you retract the words spoken by you, at any and at all times, that are in conflict with the sacred doctrines and articles of faith as promulgated by the Holy Father, the Pope of Rome; and do you make repentance?' If the accused should make a full and complete retractation, with true and unfeigned repentance, then the holy communion would be administered to him. Should he refuse to recant, he must be reconducted to prison, awaiting the final disposition of the Pope, and this, we all knew, would result in his transfer to some Italian convent, and there——?

"Holding the sacred host above the chalice, the Abbot descended the altar steps, slowly and with unsteady gait. Approaching the accused, who was absorbed in fervent prayer, with eyes cast heavenward, and his features still wearing an expression of divine serenity and hope, he held before him the consecrated wafer, and thus,

in tremulous accents, delivered the Papal injunction:

"'Brother Albertus, it is the order of the Holy Father, the Pope of Rome, Vicar-Apostolic of our Lord Jesus Christ upon earth, that you retract each and all of the words ever spoken by you in opposition to the dogmas and articles of belief as promulgated by the Catholic Church of Rome, and especially those in opposition to the doctrines relating to the creation of the world.'

"Here again the voice of the venerable Abbot broke down, but, recovering his firmness with a strong effort, he continued: 'My brother, dost thou make retractation, and dost thou in thy soul repent of the sins that are laid to thy charge?'

"Directing his eyes toward his Superior, who still held before him the sacred host, our brother observed that the Abbot could scarce refrain from tears. Rising to a standing posture, he looked him steadily in the face, but with a gaze as loving and heaven-like as a Raphael or a Cellini might impress upon the features of an archangel. Then slowly lifting his hands, he extended them toward the Abbot, as if to bestow on him a blessing.

"At this moment a halo of light encircled the head of our brother, whose features were glorified as with the radiance of a celestial being. Overpowered by emotion, the venerable Abbot sank upon his knees, still upholding the proffered host. Then spake

Albertus in slow and solemn tones, his emaciated hands extended in benediction above the head of his Superior: 'Nothing have I to retract, nor aught to repent; this only can I say, my beloved and revered Superior; may the Holy Spirit of the Infinite Creator abide with thee, even as it now abides with thy servant.'

"'Amen,' responded in unison the assembled brethren, and, as it seemed, spontaneously.

"On bended knee the Abbot accepted the benediction, and slowly rising as Brother Albertus again bowed before him, administered the holy communion. Then, with head erect, as one who had performed an act of Godlike justice, he returned to the altar and proceeded with the Mass, which he chanted in tones that betokened the exultation of his soul.

"The service ended, all the brethren surrounded Albertus and besought of him his blessing—all save one, an Italian friar named Sebastianus, a recent arrival from Rome, and newly admitted to our cloister.

"And now for the conclusion. Only a few days ago this Italian friar received from Rome a package bearing the seal of the Papal See; and yesterday the venerable Abbot, having summoned the brethren in assembly, read to us from a dispatch which he held to view before us an order dismissing him from office, and commanding him to proceed at once to Rome, accompanied

by Albertus, Sebastianus being appointed his successor.

"The reading of this Papal mandate fell upon us like a thunder-stroke, and we all stood for a moment paralyzed. Then, with a sudden impulse, we gathered around our beloved Abbot and brother Albertus, on whom we lavished every token of heart-felt sympathy and affection. Turning our eyes to the Italian spy, who shrank for a moment from our angry gaze, each asked the other what should be done. A decision was quickly reached. Burning with indignation, we entreated the Abbot to remain with us as our Superior, promising to address an earnest and solemn protest to the Pope with the object of inducing him to reconsider his decision. Thereupon the Italian friar, who had somewhat regained his composure, approached the Abbot, and with a thin and quivering voice requested to know whether the Abbot intended to obey the order of the Holy Father.

"All eyes were turned on the Superior, whose features were deadly pale, and in breathless silence we awaited his reply. For a moment he hesitated, and then, with tears streaming from his eyes, in choked and faltering accents, interrupted by sobs which our hearts could not suppress, he said:

"'I will obey the mandate of His Holiness, for so I must. Were it for your sake alone, my American brethren, I would wil-

lingly render obedience in order to spare you the enmity of Rome and the consequences that would attend it. Let the good wishes and prayers of all rest with our sainted brother Albertus, whose danger is most imminent.'

"'We will keep him with us and protect him against any one who would do him harm,' exclaimed in unison the American brethren.

"'Will our beloved Abbot hand me the key of the cloister and the seal of his office?' asked the Italian, advancing a few steps toward the Abbot.

"Without a single word, but with a look of ineffable scorn and contempt, our worthy Superior—Superior no longer—handed to his successor the insignia of his Abbotship. Then with heads bowed low, and with sadness and sorrow at heart, we retired to our cells.

"Brethren, my story is ended.

"And now I am anxious to hear your suggestions as to the measures that it would be best to adopt. For my own part, I have determined, when the proper time shall come, publicly to protest against the authority of Rome. In this free land of ours, why should Rome, with her arbitrary orders, be allowed to interfere in religious matters, any more than other foreign potentates, in political matters? The time has come to establish an American Catholic church."

"Amen," responded together the other members of the council, with accents of deep conviction.

"And now," said the Jesuit father, who, by tacit consent, acted as chairman of the party, "we will listen to the words of our esteemed and worthy colleague, who for many years has been rector of a densely populated parish in this great city. He, certainly, is thoroughly acquainted with the spiritual and material needs of the people."

"The most painful experiences of my ministration," the rector began, "have been among the poor and indigent, who form, I am sorry to say, a large proportion of our parishioners.

"Night after night have I lain awake pondering over this sad problem of poverty—poverty in its most repulsive aspect, attended with bodily suffering, completely paralyzing the human soul in its upward growth. As daily observations clearly prove to us, poverty is the primal cause of spiritual darkness, personal degradation, and actual crime. Looking for the cause of all this misery, we find its origin in the insatiable greed of the sordid and unscrupulous money accumulator.

"How has the church of Rome departed from the precepts and example of our Saviour, who cast forth the money-lenders from the temple; whose entire sympathies were with the poor; whose noblest mission was to

aid the afflicted and oppressed. Do we not see to-day even Bishops and Archbishops, ignoring the house of God, go to the gilded parlors of the rich to administer the rites of matrimony? Alas! the times are passed when Kings and Emperors, with their betrothed consorts, had to repair to the cathedrals, where, kneeling before the altar, they received the holy sacrament of matrimony uniting them in indissoluble bonds.

"Oh, my brethren, this question of poverty, of hopeless and steadily increasing poverty among the people, is the saddest of all the problems of our time, one which the priest above all other men confronts by day and night. To foster religious sentiments among the poor and destitute is utterly beyond his power.

"I cannot avoid the conviction that Rome, if not entirely indifferent to the suffering of her children, willingly refrains from taking an active part in any plan of reform which might bring permanent relief. Does not history force upon us the conclusion that the countries over which Rome has held almost undisputed dominion have been those where poverty was most prevalent and extreme? Does history bear record of Rome ever siding with the people against royalty, against the rich, the great, the powerful, their immemorial oppressors?

"I do not for a moment deny that, as is the case with other religious denominations and even with associations that profess no

religion, Rome supports orphan asylums, hospitals for the infirm, homes for the aged, and not infrequently sends personal relief to sufferers—charitable ministrations which redound to her credit. But Rome takes no decisive measures to prevent distress, or to organize a scheme of social reform such as may permanently improve the material condition of the poor. With an immense moral and spiritual force at its command, the church of Rome is afraid to give offense to the rich and powerful, and seems to be content to remain forever in the peaceful slumbers of a spiritual *dolce far niente*. Her ambition is to rule over all nations of earth; her dreams are concerned with the reestablishment of the temporal power of the Holy See, with conversions to her faith, with the founding of new parishes to provide livings for foreign priests sent forth by Rome in ever-increasing numbers to these American shores. In fine, Rome neglects religion, limiting all her efforts to the building up of the church into an invincible body politic.

"The evils resulting from this condition of hopeless poverty are brought first to the notice of the priest; for he is regarded as the friend of the people, and to him they repair to confide their woes and ask for aid and counsel. Thus it is he who, above all others, is made aware of the extent of poverty, destitution, and abject misery existing among a very large class of God's own children.

"Thus it was that being thoroughly imbued with the idea that our social conditions, as they exist to-day, are pernicious and corrupt; being keenly in sympathy with the sufferings on earth, and endeavoring to follow the example of Him who, born in a stable, had not a place to lay His head, I determined to begin a crusade against the evils which have plunged so many worthy families into hopeless poverty. Nor were my labors in vain. Ere long my church could no longer contain the crowds that came to hear me, for fearlessly did I uphold the right of every man, woman, and child to his or her proper and just share in the good things of earth. Presently the title of 'Father of the People' was bestowed on me, and I could not but feel that the Spirit of God was with me while delivering those discourses, for I was conscious of the spiritual glow which uplifted the soul from earth. Never did I ascend into the pulpit until I had first offered up an earnest and heartfelt prayer for inspiration from on high, and that the Infinite Father would vouchsafe unto me wisdom and understanding to discern the truth, and to declare it unto others as His holy will. In answer to these supplications I was endowed with the gift of eloquence, often bringing tears into the eyes of my audience. From the approbation which I received, in encouraging letters addressed to me by strangers as well as in the cheering words of friends and members of

my congregation, it now became evident that my sermons were exercising a decided influence for good, not only in my own parish, but throughout the entire city.

"But one day I was summoned to the episcopal residence, and there for the first time was made aware that Rome knew of my ministrations, and was greatly displeased thereat. I was accused of creating ill-feeling among the poor toward the rich, of breeding un-Christian strife and hatred; of preaching doctrines leading directly to communism and anarchy. All these accusations, I need hardly say, were false. While perfectly aware of the intense antagonism existing between poor and rich; while stating the mutual relations of each, I always endeavored strongly to impress upon my congregation that God could never dwell in a heart where hatred has found an abiding place; that a just understanding of the reciprocal obligations of mankind could only be reached through man's forbearance, and by sympathy for his fellow man.

"Reluctantly the Right Reverend Bishop, a true-born American, and in perfect accord with my own opinions, placed in my hands the missive from Rome. It was an order directing him at once to put a stop to my so-called socialistic preachings. I have recently heard that the good Bishop had been for some time in correspondence with Rome, and had steadily espoused my cause, until

the Holy See, tired of his procrastination, insisted on his giving me official warning, and sent him a peremptory order to communicate to me a formal notice of its displeasure. You are well aware, my brethren, that if I do not obey this order, my suspension, and soon afterward my expulsion, from the church, will follow.

"Rome, poor Rome," continued the worthy pastor, "in its senile dreams can see in all its grand mission but one thing supreme, and that is the restoration of its temporal power. To be once more monarch, surrounded with royal retinue and gorgeous soldiery; to treat in dictatorial terms with all the sovereigns of earth; to force them to kneel before him and to receive from his hands their scepters and crowns—such are the aspirations that are paramount in the mind of the Pope of Rome. As to the masses of the people, he is content to let them take care of themselves as best they may, bestowing on them his Platonic sympathy. For ourselves, as American priests, we have no need of temporal power. Spiritual power alone do we crave—the power to save human souls."

"Amen, amen," ejaculated his hearers, in accents that came direct from the heart.

"We have no desire to interfere in the making of Presidents or electing of Congressmen; but we do desire the privilege of criticizing their acts; of saying to our lawmakers—and that without any interference

on the part of Rome: 'You are mistaken; these measures of yours are wrong; they work injury to the masses; and this we state without fear of contradiction, for daily in the homes of the people have we witnessed their baneful effects. You must change the land laws, so that those who wish to obtain land suitable for cultivation can secure it readily and cheaply. You must change your government to a more paternal form, so that each State may be permitted to help its children as would a father, and especially to extend its protection over the weak. The doctrine of unobstructed and unlimited competition means, in fact, the oppression of the weak and enhancement of the strong, an extension of the law of the survival of the fittest, which is adapted to the development of plants and brutes, but is not applicable to intelligent mankind, among whom the weakest are often the most deserving.'

"To the capitalist who is guilty of oppression I would fearlessly say: 'Forbear thy unjust exactions. These people whose temporal welfare is in thy hands are no beasts of burden, but worthy and God-fearing human beings, who, with the conditions of life against them, are endeavoring to make the best of their circumstances. I give thee fair warning, that if thou dost continue to act thus heartlessly toward these parishioners, I will expose thy conduct, and treat thee as mercilessly as thou art treating

them.' Such denunciations against those who trample on the down-trodden, against those who avariciously hoard or misapply the wealth gathered from the sweat of Labor's brow, I would utter in thundering tones, regardless of any censure or peril with which they might be attended, especially," he added in emphatic tones, "without fear of the interference which Rome might attempt to interpose."

"Amen," again responded the fathers, with tokens of warm approbation.

"And," he continued, "I most heartily concur in the proposition of the father who spoke before me, namely, that we have no use in America for a church whose head is Rome, and who is entirely ignorant of the needs, the progress, the idiosyncrasies, and independence of character of the American people. What we want, as the father says, is an *American Catholic church*, whose visible head, an American, will dwell in the United States."

The rector had spoken with warmth and eloquence, and had carried conviction to the heart of his listeners, who, however, had already arrived at almost identical conclusions.

After a moment's silence, the Jesuit father took up the discussion, and proceeded thus:

"We seem to be agreed that in the interest of man's spiritual growth, and also of his material welfare, the doctrines of true religion must harmonize with the principles

of science and admit its proven conclusions. Let us, then, freely confess that science, with its wonderful revelations in regard to the Universe, will be a welcome handmaid and co-worker for the elevation of mankind. It will unfold to us such limitless vistas that the infinitude of the Universe, in keeping with the infinitude of its Creator, will bestow on the mind ever-increasing comprehension. This will develop inquiry; inquiry, in its turn, will develop understanding; and understanding begets faith—faith positive, based on knowledge, and not on the *ipse dixit* of all and sundry, be they even the Popes of Rome.

"At the present day, science has become sadly materialistic. In the interest of science and of Mammon, God's earth is being ransacked and its surface seamed with rents; telescopes are built to pierce the secrets of the skies; but does the astronomer look for discoveries that will aid our spiritual aspirations through a better understanding of the wonders and perfections of the Universe? No; even the astronomer, whose domain is infinitude itself, whose science is the science of the heavens, is, alas! often himself a materialist. Astronomy no longer strives after the attainment of its higher and nobler purpose. It mainly searches for comets, calculates the volume, the distances, velocities, orbits, ages, and stages of growth of the heavenly bodies. If the true philosopher had not assumed the task of spirit-

ualizing this science by carefully collecting and comparing its discoveries, by studying their importance and co-relation, and then, with these revelations as a basis, directing the mind of the student to the many indications pointing toward the sublime destiny of all that is, then would the astronomer no more minister to the spiritual needs of humanity than does the pure mathematician of to-day.

"Let us cast a glance at that great occult force named 'Electricity,' which is the very handmaid of the Infinite Father in building up and supporting His Universe. What does man do with it? He takes it by violence from the free realm where the Almighty placed it to perform its part in the working out of his transcendent scheme—the evolution of worlds, with all things contained therein; he compels it to light up the streets of cities, to transport heavy loads, to carry messages to distances of thousands of miles. In fact, he makes use of it as he would of a domesticated animal. What return does man make unto God for the use of one of the most potent of his forces? Does he even address to him an occasional prayer, an expression of gratitude and thanksgiving? No; as the African slave-hunter beats the bush, scours the forest and plains in search of his human quarry, so do our scientific men, in every quarter of the globe, hunt for their servitors. As new forces are discovered, man brings to bear

upon them all the powers of his command, and, when he has gained the mastery, they must thenceforth work without ceasing for his benefit. The scientist who makes a discovery may, perhaps, send forth to the great Architect of the Universe a spontaneous expression of admiration, but the next day he will direct his steps to the office of the man-brute, who pays him money for his invention, applies the yoke and instruments of travail, places the harness on the captured force, and sets the slave to work. He never thinks, for one moment, that he ought at least to be thankful to God for being permitted to make use of His force, though such acknowledgment is all that God demands, and is invariably answered by His blessing on him who offers it, making him better and nobler, and bringing him nearer to his Maker.

"But to return to the church; we do not wish the head of our American Catholic church, to assume the garb of infallibility. There is no infallibility on earth; for the higher we climb, and the greater the stream of inspiration we receive from above, the more profoundly do we realize the immeasurable distance which separates us from Infallibility, that Godlike child of supreme divine knowledge. No; our candidates for priesthood should study the natural sciences, for the reason that such study largely develops the intellect, and in a safe direction, and also because a thorough understanding

of the laws of the Universe and their sublime co-relation cannot fail to awaken a profound adoration for the Author of all things, and instill a feeling of infinite trust in the final destiny of man.

"Here is the domain of true religion. Our priests, imbued with the Spirit of God, in possession also of the knowledge pertaining to earth, will become the steadfast friends of the young, and the beloved and trusted spiritual advisers of all. Our young men, returning from the secular schools of philosophy and science, will know that they can address us freely concerning the enlarged ideas which these lofty branches of learning always instill into young and inquiring minds; that they will receive encouragement from us, and find in us a feeling of warm and responsive sympathy. Then will they be attracted, and constantly apply to us; and hence shall we derive an opportunity to continue our spiritual guidance, to counteract any leaning toward materialism, should some poor, deluded teacher have taken upon himself the responsibility of instructing them in its soul-destroying doctrines."

"Amen, amen," responded his listeners, in tones that betokened the sympathy of honest conviction. "American Catholicism," remarked the father of the cloister, "must encourage inspiration from on high, by allowing free expression of thought to the members of all religious orders whose pure

and abstemious lives, whose ardent aspiration for spiritual enlightenment, have opened to them the portals of the supersensuous world, giving them entrance into the domain of the Infinite and vivid consciousness of the omnipresence of their Divine Maker. In almost every convent one member at least can be found, who, through supreme devotion and faith, supplemented by a hypersensitive organization and fostered by an ascetic life, has become gifted with insight into things eternal. But since the dogmas emanating from Rome condemn spiritual revelations unless they be in accord with its warped and superannuated doctrines, thereby rendering soul-progress impossible, American Catholicism must free itself from them if it would crave for its children guidance from on high.

"Then," continued the rector, "since Rome forbids us to take an active part in social reforms tending to better the condition of the poor in their spiritual no less than in their temporal condition, by cleansing their hearts from baneful thoughts, their hands from the pollution of crimes often committed in utter despair, forbids us to help the middle classes in their almost hopeless struggle for material independence, it becomes imperative that American Catholicism should ignore the authority of Rome. Americans, born on their own free soil, on a continent separated by thousands of miles from the old world with its fossil-

ized institutions and fading superstitions, have no other choice than to withdraw from the church of Rome, over the record of which we will, in charity, draw a veil—a record, the responsibility of endorsing and justifying which no American priest, with honest heart, can conscientiously assume.

"And in relation to this it may be well to say a few words about what is called the school question, and the effort of the Pope to mix himself up in our internal American affairs; of his endeavors to obtain public money for the benefit of Catholic schools, under pretext that no religious instruction is given in the schools of the State; that these schools are Godless institutions, and far too successful in producing worshipers of Mammon. I certainly agree with the Holy Father as to the Godlessness of the public schools, and the total absence therein of religious instruction. But I ask, can no other way be found to instruct youth in the precepts of religion than by diverting the public school funds for the benefit of every creed and sect now in existence, and of others that would assuredly spring up if such a system were adopted, if only to secure a share of the appropriation? No; the instruction and education of the people must remain in the hands of the State, and equally must they remain unsectarian. That no religion should be taught in schools is one of the most pernicious of errors; one that undermines the very foun-

dation upon which man may build an honorable career. Religion, moreover, is above sects and creeds, and instruction in that higher religion we must endeavor to establish in the schools of the commonwealth. All sects and creeds of whatever church or denomination agree upon the existence of a Supreme Being; some call it God, others Jehovah; the Mohammedans call it Allah, and the Hindoos, Brahm and Parabrahm. All these variously designated Supreme Beings are endowed with the same transcendental attributes by their devotees, and constitute one and the same Deity. As to the introduction into our public schools of this Supreme Being worshiped by all, members of all churches and beliefs could be brought to harmonize, and non-believer or materialist, can urge no serious reasons to oppose to the belief in a Supreme Being, for such belief develops veneration, a love for higher attainments, admiration for all that is grand, noble, good, and true, teaches respect for and obedience to parents—to all of which the unbeliever can surely oppose no serious objection. Upon secondary deities and prophets only do the followers of creeds disagree—Moses, Christ, Buddha, Mohammed, and others. In concert with the leaders of all religious beliefs, the Catholics should use the immense influence they wield to bring this Supreme God into the public schools, and thus instill reverence into the minds of the children, proving thereby that

what lies uppermost in their hearts is the spiritualization of man, regardless of any mercenary compensation.

"These endeavors of the Pope to get his hands upon the school fund are the cause of great social disturbance, and have led to the springing-up of various anti-Catholic societies, who fill the air with powerful disturbing vibrations, to the detriment of all religious advancement among the brotherhood of man.

"The thought of diverting the public school fund to the purpose of promoting the interest of any religious creed would not for one moment occupy the mind of a native-born American priest. Nor would he wage war against the fraternal orders of Free Masons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, and others, for well he knows that these orders, in this country at least, are composed of the most inoffensive and best-intentioned men, practising fraternity not only in its esthetic sense, but affording material aid to its members with lavish hand. For this reason the proceedings of those societies must remain unpublished, and in order to keep out the intruder and undeserving persons the secrecy of their tenets must be surrounded by efficient safeguards. Hence from Rome alone could emanate the command to the American priest to try to lay hands upon the school fund, and through the confessional ask the wife to become a spy against her husband,

the daughter against her father, in the matter of secret societies.

"The Catholic religion, my beloved fathers, is an institution of divine origin, but sadly polluted by man. Let us free it of all that man's ignorance (we will in charity call it such) has added to or taken from it, and let it be our united endeavor to restore it to its pristine purity, grandeur, and usefulness."

"I would suggest," remarked the Jesuit, "that the holding of lectures on philosophy and science, somewhat similar to those we would prescribe for theological seminaries, should be introduced into our cloisters and religious brotherhoods, and that even nuns be in a measure instructed in the arts as well as in matters spiritual. After a few years passed in cloister or convent, when the members of our religious organizations shall, through positive knowledge and divine intuition, have become sufficiently fortified against the allurements of the world, then, instead of having recourse to vain castigations, needless hardships, and routine prayers for the salvation of their own individual souls, the majority of them, as a worthy consummation of their long and profitable term of probation, might be sent forth into the world as instructors and companions to the young. The spiritualizing influence which such worthy, learned, and absolutely reliable preceptors, free from all trace of superstition, would exercise

upon the members of American families, would be of incalculable benefit both in a moral and religious sense."

"As a parish priest, whose duties often bring him in contact with the best families," observed the rector, "I can assure you that this suggestion is most valuable, for thus would our cloisters and convents be converted from almost useless institutions, as they are to-day, into powerful agencies for the redemption of society, whose condition grows every year more Godless and insincere."

"Well spoken," ejaculated the fathers enthusiastically.

"Thus," continued the priest, "might be avoided the lamentable error of admitting into, and having to retain in, our convents and cloisters those who, discovering too late that their religious vows were taken rashly and hastily, realize their entire unfitness to lead an exclusively religious life, and constantly chafe under the prescribed austerities and discipline, but whose return into the world is made impossible by their inability to struggle for the means of existence. The lives of these unfortunates are a mere succession of days filled with darkness and despair, until death, as an angel of deliverance, puts an end to their misery."

"This is, unfortunately, too true," exclaimed the listeners.

"I still remember with horror a visit I made while in Europe to a cloister of Trap-

pist friars. Though its site was in a desert of sand, the ground appeared to have been made extremely productive by the friars. The buildings were of brick, of imposing dimensions, and with no windows visible from the exterior. High, blind walls surrounded the entire structure. In the interior, the walls of the halls, cells, passages, and even the stables, displayed printed inscriptions setting forth the utter worthlessness of man, and well calculated to drive its inmates to desperation. The daily fare was of the scantiest—a few ounces of bread, with a modicum of oil. Self-castigation of the body with knotted cords was inflicted each night and morning. The friars repaired to the chapel at nine in the evening, at midnight, at four in the morning, and at other brief intervals, offering prayers without cessation for their deliverance from earth. When one of them dies he is buried without a coffin, while his companions sing a hymn of joy—the '*Te Deum*'—in honor of his translation; for the Trappist monks, according to their tenets, are admitted into heaven on the very day of their death, there being no purgatory for them.

"Many of the friars, on learning that an American priest was visiting the cloister, asked permission to confess to him. The request was granted by the Abbot. Then it was that I became utterly appalled to find that many of these poor wretches were partially demented, others entirely so. Their

faces were pale, their look was haggard, while their spasmodic jerking motions proclaimed terrible injury to the nervous and muscular systems. Most of them were partially bereft of the faculty of speech, since from the moment they pass through the entrance of the cloister their vows bind them to silence and close the gate to conversational intercourse. Oh, dear fathers, this picture of wretchedness has haunted me for years. For my own part I am convinced that I could not have remained in that dreadful institution a single year without becoming a confirmed and hopeless lunatic."

This heart-rending account greatly impressed the fathers, who doubted not the truthfulness of the description. After a moment's pause the father of the cloister asked:

"What are the ceremonies and articles of faith that the American Catholic church should adopt?"

"This is a matter too serious to be decided off hand. In my opinion," suggested the parish priest, "the ceremonies should in the main be retained. Confession, however, should be recommended only as an act to be voluntarily performed by those who earnestly strive for spiritual growth, and who, meeting with repeated obstruction, find themselves in need of spiritual advice. They ought faithfully to relate their struggles; unreservedly confess their failures and the cause of them; point out the obsta-

cles which have impeded their spiritual progress; and then ask counsel of their spiritual advisers, as they would of their best and most trusted friends in secular matters, knowing them to be fully competent to render the aid and consolation desired.

"As to an American Pope, it is my humble opinion that we have no need of one. A supreme council of cardinals who should choose their spiritual head, or chief executive, from their own body, is all that we seem to require."

"We fully concur," answered the other priests.

"And now," asked the Jesuit, "when and how shall our American Catholic church be organized?"

At this momentous question a grave and serious look overspread the countenance of every member of the council.

"Let us pray for enlightenment," said the rector with solemnity, "and may the Heavenly Father grant us inspiration."

After the lapse of some minutes, during which was offered the most fervent prayer these men of God could utter, the Jesuit father resumed:

"We can but abide God's own time," he said. "Meanwhile, let us proceed in our ministrations in conformity with the principles adopted by us to-night as being the fundamental basis of an American Catholic church. Soon enough the conflict with

Rome will ensue, and when it comes we must remain true to the dictates of conscience, whatever the consequence may be, whether temporary suspension from our ministrations, or even excommunication from the Roman church. This may happen soon, perhaps, to any one of us, and then it will be the duty of the others to give to him whom God shall have chosen as the corner-stone of his true church on earth, all the moral support of which they are capable, and, if God so wills it, to proclaim voluntarily their severance from Rome, and follow in his footsteps."

"Amen," exclaimed the others.

"And if the lot should fall upon some father at present unknown to us—for rebellion against Rome, unmanifest and unproclaimed as yet, is being silently brooded in the breast of many an American priest—then let us accord him our warmest encouragement until God's time shall arrive for us to array ourselves on his side."

"Amen, amen," once more exclaimed the others.

"Do we all agree to what has been said?" asked the Jesuit.

"We do," responded the others with reverential emphasis.

"Then, brethren, let us address our thankful supplications to the throne of God, for I feel that the Holy Spirit has been with us."

After long and earnest prayer, the three holy men departed, each bearing with him the strength and fervor of his convictions.

CHAPTER VII.

MAGUS GASPAR, while listening to the utterance of these regularly ordained Roman Catholic priests, felt as one in a dream. He could hardly realize that these men had taken upon themselves the grave and solemn responsibility of declaring war against the infallibility of the Pope of Rome, the time having finally arrived when they would have to choose between fealty to him and the open declaration of their conviction and conscience.

Upon reentering his body, the first words that passed his lips were:

"God bless the American people which has given birth to such noble specimens of humanity. This, indeed, is the country that will inaugurate the reign of God upon earth, and divine was the inspiration of my holy predecessor that instigated him to send me to this favored land. To contemplate the intellect, the earnestness of purpose in the service of God, and the high degree of spirituality possessed by these priests, gives me much happiness. With their efficacy in working out good they would be of high value as members of our order; for with them as our coadjutors, the social and spiritual reformation of the commonwealth might

be accomplished in peace. It is to such intellects as these, to the counsel given with the eloquence of conviction, that the masses are ready to listen; and it is the force of will that is directed toward raising them from their oppressed condition that they are willing to obey. Indeed these priests, with their great personalities and separate characteristics, have all the qualities of true leaders of men, the three constituting the holy trinity of learning, spirituality, and the love of humanity. May Parabrahm lead them on to the fulfillment of their noble purpose, and grant them strength to remain steadfast to the dictates of their consciences; with them, henceforth, will my spirit abide."

A few days later, Gaspar again laid his body to rest, and disengaging from it his consciousness once more made ascent into the spirit zone of earth. Scanning with deep interest the radiations sent into this zone from below, he soon perceived, prominent among all, a ray of exceptional brilliancy and great steadiness, betokening intense faith in Parabrahm, and a truthful, unwavering recognition of the existence and power of spiritual forces. Immerging himself into this ray, Gaspar traced it to its origin. Descended to earth it led him to a mountainous country dotted with snow-covered peaks. Upon the side of a principal spur lay a cottage snugly ensconced in a pleasant nook. From its wide veranda an enchanting view was seen. Meandering

brooks, like silvery ribbons, flowed through flowery valleys which gradually rose to the foothills, while these in turn were crowned by a range of pine-covered mountains whose forms were bathed in a soft blue haze of transparent atmosphere. This lovely vista was canopied by a sky of softest mellowness, inviting poet and mystic to dreamy meditation and the contemplation of things divine. In front of the cottage was a beautiful flower garden, and from a huge rock in its rear there flowed a spring of crystal water so pure, yet so impregnated with life-giving magnetism, that ablutions in it invigorated body and brain, and removed all feeling of fatigue or exhaustion.

The cottage was inhabited by a man who had passed the middle age of life. His silvery hair, full white beard, and venerable appearance imposed respect, while his noble mien, distinguished manner, and grace of movement were suggestive of the high-bred gentleman.

He was standing at the moment before a huge rock with a flat surface, generally designated a table-rock. Upon this rock a tree was growing, the offspring of a seed which had been planted years ago probably by some traveling bird. As he gazed on this production of nature the following reflections passed through the mind of the recluse and were read by the Magus.

"Some years ago this tree, no longer able to find on this rock sustenance necessary

for the preservation of life, began to wither during the dry season of summer. With a feeling of compassion in my heart for the suffering plant, which I saw was slowly dying, I waited with a certain degree of anxiousness the approach of the rainy season, wondering whether moisture would instill new life into the tree. In due time the rains came, and a process of vivification set in. Not only did the tree revive, but the shrunken roots swelled out again to their normal size, and to my astonishment sent forth tender rootlets in the direction of the earth beneath, which they evidently strove to reach. These efforts, however, were fruitless, the dry season causing the delicate shoots to perish before they had reached half-way down the side of the innutritious rock. These struggles of the tree to reach the fertile ground, which could be its only possible savior, were renewed year after year with ever-repeated failure, until two years ago, when, the wet season being of unusual length, one little rootlet at last succeeded in reaching, and implanting itself in, the bosom of the foster-mother of all growth. Thereupon the rootlet expanded rapidly and sent up nourishment to its starving parent which soon assumed the aspect of perfect health. The root, which had reached the earth, ere long acquired size and strength, and then a further proceeding on the part of the tree was noticeable. It began to bend over toward the new

root, and, slowly detaching itself from the rock, finally rested its body altogether upon it. Thus a new and vigorous existence was vouchsafed to my beloved plant.

"I think that I really loved thee," he mused aloud as he continued gazing at the tree. "While watching for years thy life's career, I seemed to participate in thy suffering as thou wert slowly withering through inability to obtain food. With thy hopes I hoped, as year after year thou didst send forth those little rootlets toward the earth, and as these in turn became atrophied by the summer heat, with thy sufferings did I suffer—thy disappointment became mine. At last, when one of thy tentacles reached the bed of mold beneath thee, when it succeeded in implanting its tiny filament in the rich soil, and this filament swelled and sent up sap, then I seemed to feel its palpitations and thy own heart-beatings when the life-giving fluid reached thee. Thy fresh and juicy leaves, as they put on their brilliant verdure, seemed to send up to heaven a triumphant hymn of praise in thankfulness for having been rescued from death."

Ceasing to soliloquize aloud, the mountaineer philosopher resumed his reflections:

"What is the occult force that guided this tree in the different stages of its career? It cannot be attraction and repulsion only, for there was undoubtedly exhibited a certain grade of instinct approaching to a low

degree of intelligent thought. Disappointment and suffering must have been experienced, as also joy and exultation when the life-saving earth was reached. Fain would I know the truth about this unseen force."

As the thought flashed through the recluse's mind, the Magus projected a ray of his own consciousness upon that earnest inquirer who, immediately looking upward, as though he had received a fresh inspiration, resumed his soliloquy:

"Now do I perceive that all the phenomena of the Universe unfold themselves in an ever-ascending scale, no point of interruption being perceptible on the line of upward march. The mineral kingdom is blended into the vegetable kingdom, and the vegetable realm into the animal realm, so gradually intermingling as to leave no line of demarcation between them. All is harmony, all is complete—no hiatus, no gap exists in the Universe of God."

The Magus at once perceived the psychic status of his newly-discovered hermit, his noble, true and intellectual qualities. That he was possessed of high scientific attainments was evidenced by a complete laboratory of philosophical instruments, among which electrical apparatus, a goodly sized telescope, many astronomical charts, both old and modern, were noticeable. A deep student in occult lore as expounded by the oldest masters and the latest devotees to the investigation of magnetism and hypnotism,

a soul full of veneration for the powers that be, vividly desirous to know more of the supersensuous world, overflowing with faith in the supreme powers that govern the Universe, spiritual in the highest degree, and in religious matters absolutely unbiased, welcoming every creed with upward tendencies—such was the man in whom terminated the golden radiations followed by the Magus.

And now made happy in his fortunate discovery, Gaspar enwrapped the dweller on the mountainside with his own aura of spirit-consciousness, and having bestowed his most heartfelt blessing on him, returned to his body which, as if in the stillness of death, awaited him in the armchair.

When the Magus enfolded in his aura the mountaineer recluse, the latter instantaneously felt an influx, the impression conveyed being that a visitor of a higher sphere had entered his abode. Though unaware that such visitation had actually occurred, and which had lasted but a moment, he, nevertheless, became conscious that a blessing had been bestowed upon him, and sent a prayer of thankfulness to the Ruler of all things, offering his life to the service of those on high, if such service might prove acceptable. As if in answer to his heartfelt appeal, in the night of the same day a voice, audible and distinct, said to him:

"Thy services are accepted. Prepare to enter upon thy duties. Nine days and nine nights shalt thou fast, pray, and do penance."

The recluse obeyed this mandate, fasting, praying, and doing penance for the nine consecutive days and nights. During the whole of that period he felt himself to be overshadowed by a divine presence, instilling into him confidence, and conveying the impression that a great destiny, accompanied with corresponding responsibilities, lay before him; that he had been chosen to fulfill a most important mission, the faithful accomplishment of which might grant to him his life-long desire, namely, the award of spirit illumination, or cognizance of the laws regulating the supersensuous world, and the gratification of the powers inherent therein.

On the night following the ninth day, the moon was shining in all its loveliness over mountains and valleys, converting brooks into streams of quicksilver, and giving fantastic shapes to the mountain tops, their profiles being sharply silhouetted on the bright evening sky.

Seated on the front porch of his lovely cottage overlooking the electric lights of a distant city, situated in the plain below, the venerable man, gazing at the stars that fretted the sky of the beautiful summer night, was pouring forth to heaven the last prayer of his imposed devotion. The prayer ended,

a voice was heard in the air uttering these words:

"On the morrow shalt thou journey eastward to the western border of the great waters. Thou wilt be guided on thy way. Have faith."

This recluse on the mountainside we will name Marius for convenience' sake, inasmuch as the divulging of his real name would lead to identification, which at the present time, in the opinion of the order, would not be conducive to the greatest usefulness. His ancestors were among the first Pilgrim fathers, and from father to son had been ministers of the Gospel. Marius also had been ordained. His large intellect, aided by a thorough scientific education, supplemented by a complete course in philosophy, taken in the most noted University of the United States, had been further expanded by studies in France and Germany. His acquaintance while there with the leading intellects of Europe; the study of music and the fine arts in Italy, the country of their birth, had united in evolving Marius into one of the most intellectual and religious men of the world. Religious sentiment was born in him, inherited from a succession of worthy ancestors; nor did he, in his most eager pursuit of science, ever separate it from religion. Every natural law, the harmonious workings of which were explained to him, evoked worship of the Heavenly Father; every discovery in

astronomy, unfolding the grandeur of the Universe, awoke in him a feeling of adoration; every law of magnetism and electricity that was brought to light, giving a more complete understanding of these occult forces of nature, filled him with respectful enthusiasm expressed in a worshipful sentiment, which he never forgot to send up to the Author of all the beautiful manifestations of the Universe.

These high attainments had, however, so enlarged his understanding, that he could no longer preach the narrow dogmas of the Puritan creed. This he made plain to his relatives and friends in a simple and honest manner. Their resentment at what they termed his backsliding soon became manifest, and Marius, in sadness of heart (for dearly did he love his kin) wended his way toward that great West which ever opens its grand expanse to the suffering soul, and there made his abode on a mountain range, at an altitude above the inharmonious vibrations of city and valley, and where inspiration from on high could be received undisturbed by the auras of mercenary and bartering humanity below. There Gaspar discovered him, and found him worthy.

CHAPTER VIII.

On the morrow Marius set out on his eastward journey. Not a shade of mistrust crossed his mind; faith absolute had taken possession of his soul. The occult voice he would obey, for he knew that all would be well.

A few hours later, when the fast-speeding train carried him onward to his unknown goal, his spirit was singing an exultant hymn, as if he were wending his way to a joyful festival, to wedding festivities, perhaps, for, indeed, a wedding it was to be—a wedding that would bind him more closely and forever to the powers of heaven.

Arriving one evening at a large city, not far distant from the sea coast, Marius felt impressed to alight. On stepping from a sleeping-car, he was met by Ralph, who bade him enter a carriage which was in waiting. Without hesitation, Marius did as requested, and soon he was in the presence of the Magus Gaspar. The latter, after having spiritually communed with his newly arrived guest, instructed Ralph to conduct him to the apartments prepared for him, in order that he might take the rest much needed after so long a journey.

"On the morrow, at the hour of nine, I will see my brother," he said, with a friendly gesture.

Thereupon Marius, preceded by Ralph, retired, and was soon enjoying the much-coveted repose.

During his sleep a vision opened before him, by which he was made to behold the entire career of Brother Angelo, afterwards Bishop of Simla in India; his temporary sojourn in a monastery of Thibet, where the three degrees of the Himalayan Brotherhood were conferred upon him; his residence in Belgium as Prince-Archbishop of Liège; his subsequent call to England, where he was invested with the dignity of Magus; the translation to heaven of Gaspar, his predecessor; his experience in the Vatican; and, finally, his journey to America.

The vision, continuing to unroll events, proceeded to show Marius the occult means that had brought him to the notice of the Magus whose guest he now was, and the reasons why he had been found worthy.

When he awoke, the vision of the night remained vividly impressed on the mind of Marius; he realized that he had beheld more than the phantasmagoria of a dream—it was, indeed, a didactic exposition of realities which had taken place in the life of his worthy host—and that the privilege of being allowed to contemplate the transcending scenes of such a holy life had been

vouchsafed to him for instruction, in order that he might be aware of the surpassing spiritual altitude to which his host had been exalted.

Marius at once understood the import of the vision, and to the Heavenly Father sent up an ardent prayer of thankfulness. Almost dismayed at the vast responsibilities which he felt were about to be entrusted to him, he, nevertheless, with unwavering faith and firm trust, awaited the hour which would summon him to the presence of the one whom he now knew so well, and of whose celestial attributes and dignity he had lately been made aware.

When the clock struck nine a rap at the door notified Marius that the time was at hand. Ralph entered, and making obeisance informed Marius that his Master awaited him.

Proceeding together Ralph led the way through a series of rooms, until they stood before the door of an apartment which Ralph intimated was the Sanctuary. Opening the door they entered the sacred place, and Marius was conducted to a prayer-desk, the Magus being engaged in devotion before the shrine. Marius joined in fervent prayer.

The prayer ended, the Magus seated himself, and, motioning his guest to a chair by his side, entered into converse with him.

"Last night," commenced the Magus, "thou wast made aware of the various incidents of my career, of the steady occult in-

fluence that has overshadowed it, and of the existence of different occult orders. Thou knowest the holy functions vested in myself, the responsibilities of my office, its ideals and aims, both social and spiritual. Thou hast also been made to realize that in America must our sacred order be established, sanctuaries erected, and holy shrines blessed; furthermore, that upon thyself that duty will devolve, if thou art willing. Useless will it be to claim unworthiness, for thou hast been found worthy. Dost thou assent?"

"I do, Most Worshipful Master, as you deem useless any protest of unworthiness," answered Marius, making profound obeisance.

"It is well. Now will I proceed to unroll before thee the sacred papyri containing the philosophy professed by our order and the duties imposed by it.

"Many years have I spent in deciphering the instructions imparted by the voluminous rolls lying on this table and condensing them into a plain, concise statement, easy of comprehension by men of good ordinary intelligence, as well as by the scientist and philosophical student. Have I thy attention?"

"Your servant listens, Most Worshipful Master."

Magus Gaspar then proceeded thus:

"It is now admitted by some of our foremost scientists that our Earth is governed,

its rotary motion induced, its journey through space directed by magnetic lines of force, the vibrations of which are as yet immeasurable, and the origin of which is supposed to lay in the Sun.

"The discovery of the existence of these lines of force in the Universe is the most momentous step humanity has yet taken along the road of progress, of evolution.

"In truth, the Earth, and the other satellites of the Sun as well, are controlled and permitted existence by lines of force emanating from that brilliant orb. We must add, however, that all other bodies, celestial or terrestrial, in fact, the entire Universe, manifest and unmanifest, is guided, directed, and controlled by lines of force emanating from a much higher source, from the Spiritual Sun itself, the abode of pure spirit, the occult, primal source, not only of all force, but of all that is.

"The law and origin of these primal lines of force, and of their innumerable derivatives, have constituted, for untold ages, the most awful of the sacred mysteries of our order, and well may it be so considered, for in them lies hidden the secret of the very existence of God, of Parabrahm.

"The mystery of the involution and evolution of the Universe, and, consequently, that intricate and most studied of all problems, the destiny of man, can be elucidated only through a clear understanding of these lines of force, of their origin and functions.

"The order is aware (and this is most encouraging to the disciple), that physical science will soon become a helpmate to the occultist, and a very valuable one, for it has ventured across the threshold of the higher knowledge, and now trespasses resolutely upon the domain of occultism. It is trying earnestly to unlock the portals of the temple where, thus far, have dwelt undisturbed, in absolute peace, the holy custodians of the most sacred mysteries.

"The Masters for many years have watched, with anxious care and sympathetic interest, these investigations of the scientist, have fostered them with occult encouragement, and they now plainly discern that science has attained a stage of growth such that its devotees are able to understand and appreciate an elucidation of the Great Law; the order, consequently, has permitted that this elucidation shall be given to the world.

"Firstly, we will confirm the discovery of the scientists above referred to, those pioneers into the realms of the 'vague world,' as they term it, by saying that lines of force exist in reality between the Sun and his satellites, and, moreover, that to interference with these lines of force, causing in them a lowering of their rate of vibration, are due all the manifestations of growth, of life, which is constantly taking place upon these satellites. We must add, however, that these lines of force are merely

secondary ones, magnetic in their nature, the functions of which are solely interplanetary, limited to the various solar systems.

"The primal lines of force, those which give birth to the numberless secondary lines, the occultist knows originate in space, at a point so remote, so far beyond our Universe inhabited by suns and stars, that its distance far transcends the conceivable.

"For many centuries the belief has been that all space, however limitless in its expanse, is the abode of heavenly bodies, and this belief is based, reasonably enough, upon the discovery that, in proportion as the telescope in its evolution, if we may so speak, grows in power, a new field of heavenly bodies invariably appears beyond the farthest star seen by means of the preceding instrument of less magnitude. And this process of discovery of new fields of stars, as more powerful telescopes and giant astronomical mirrors may be evolved, will go on for centuries yet; it is nevertheless true that the Universe, with its celestial occupants—suns, stars, planets, comets, nebulæ, and the entire array of its brilliant galaxies, occupies actually but a small portion of endless space. Far beyond this manifest Universe; far beyond the remotest star brought to view by the most powerful instrument, inconceivably distant in the endless regions of infinitude, abides the Sun of all suns, the center of all force, the nucleus of all consciousness, the brain-

essence of all intellection, the unmanifest source of all manifestation, the prime factor of all existence, the Omnipotent, the Omniscient, the Incomprehensible, the Divine Awfulness, Parabrahm—the Godhead in its primeval, pure, and divine essence.

"From this occult and divine center of pure spirit, emanate, or rather are projected, lines of force which permeate all space and govern the Universe. Vibrations, unimaginable in number, incomprehensible in velocity, convey this force in radiating lines.

"These lines of force being direct emanations from the Godhead, yea, projections from its own Divine Being, are endowed with all the attributes, possibilities, and potencies of pure spirit.

"They fill all space, permeate all things, and to the modifications brought into the mode and velocity of the vibrations transmitting this force, our visible Universe, with all the wonderful creations it contains, owes its existence.

"You will ask, what causes may prove adequate to interfere with these lines of force to compel them to evolve manifest nature? What power in the Universe, or out of it, is sufficiently great to be able to affect the number of vibrations in these lines emanating directly from the divine central Sun, from the All-powerful, the Omnipotent?

"To answer this transcendent question, in a manner conducive to a clear under-

standing of so deep a mystery, it is well to proceed with a few material illustrations.

"Physical science sets forth and proves that our planet Earth is a gigantic magnet, lines of magnetic force surrounding it, permeating it in all parts. This magnetism is the life-giving principle of all physical manifestation upon this earth, as will be elucidated farther on.

"As a first illustration, we will place a pane of glass upon one of the poles of a bar magnet, and upon it sift iron filings; these filings will arrange themselves in symmetry with the lines of force emanating from the magnet, which will be in straight radiating lines, as illustrated in *Fig. 1.*

"Secondly, let us curve this magnet into the shape of *Fig. 2.* The lines of force will immediately appear between the positive pole A and the negative pole B, and in their mutual effort to reach each its opposite pole a magnetic stress will become clearly established. This stress acts in lines which science designates as lines of force, of magnetic force, and inferentially it may be stated here that along these lines of magnetic force, and only along these lines, can intelligent communication ever be established without the use of wires.

"If we insert between the magnetic poles A and B a drum covered with wire, thus obstructing the free passage of the magnetic lines of force, we have the principle of the dynamo-electric machine. (*Fig. 3.*)

"A dynamo converts magnetism into electricity, and it is this electricity which lights up our streets through its arc lamps, our theaters by means of incandescent lights, which runs our street cars by inducing a rotary motion to a motor to which wheels are attached, etc.

"The principle of the force given out by the dynamo lies in the magnets which form its most important parts.

"If we revolve the drum or armature inserted between the poles of the magnets, the motion will interfere with the direct course of the magnetic lines of force, and by cutting them cause a physical change resulting in the formation of other lines of force with a lower rate of vibration, constituting what science terms 'Electricity.'

"When the electricity thus formed is offered a path congenial to its nature, it follows such path immediately, and the electric current is established. Metallic wires, especially of copper, offer such paths.

"In the dynamo, the electricity evolved will flow along the wires connected with the armature, provided its opposite pole, which it always endeavors to reach, is at the other end of the wire, and a current or circuit will immediately ensue.

"The electrician, through long and practical research, has discovered that when obstacles are opposed to the free course of this current, certain well-determined phenomena appear. Taking advantage of this

discovery, he places in the path of the current such mechanical contrivances as will offer a closely calculated resistance to its free passage, thus lowering considerably its rate of vibration, and the perceptible physical effects of heat and light are produced, as illustrated in the arc and incandescent lamps.

"Interference with the magnetic lines of force surrounding and permeating our Earth, a reduction in their rate of vibration, originates thunder-storms, tornadoes, earthquakes, northern lights, the aurora borealis, and the like.

"The occultist well knows that all manifestations in nature, physical, intellectual, and spiritual, are due to interference, to changes brought in the ratio of vibration of the imponderable forces of the Universe.

"In a ray of light, for instance, place an obstacle, say a triangular piece of crystal called a prism, thereby lowering its rate of vibration; visible effects will appear immediately in the form of the colors of the rainbow, each color possessing a different rate of vibration.

"In electrical science, a certain voltage or electrical pressure will give heat, light, motion, and may be harmless to man. A high voltage is used in electrocution; the electric current, with a terrific increase in the number of its vibrations, penetrating and disintegrating every nerve, muscle, and tissue, causes death, while an immensely

higher number of volts, inducing current vibrations of thousands of millions per second, is perfectly harmless, the current being so swift that it runs upon the surface of nerves and muscles, having no time to penetrate these organs, hence causing no harm to man, who receives this tremendous current almost unperceived.

"Similarly, man is living in the midst of the all-pervading divine lines of force. Their velocity is so inconceivably swift, the number of their vibrations so immeasurably great, that he is totally unaware of their existence. The effects only of decided interference with their ratio of vibration are perceived by him.

"And now, listen well to this most occult revelation, made for the first time to the world:

"The divine lines of force are composed of three main rays, forming the mystic Trinity—the Ray of Matter, the Ray of Mind, and the Ray of Spirit.

"The Ray of Matter is the parent of the material Universe. In it is contained, in an utterly inconceivable state of sublimation, the essence of all material things. The first interference with the vibrations of this Ray of Matter is caused by the natural current inherent in polarity. This first interference, or lowering of the rate of vibration, engenders the magnetic lines of force; these in turn produce electric currents, and the infinite combinations of both, due to their

limitless interconvertibility, project incessantly into the Ray of Matter such endless series of counter vibrations that matter, gradually passing through the unperceivable state of essence, becomes visible in its radiating and gaseous condition, finally to assume the visible and tangible form of liquid and solid—this, mark well, by having its rates of vibration constantly lowered.

"I spoke about currents inherent in polarity. Physical science is wide awake as to the momentous importance of polarity in nature, and its researches into that field will lead eventually to the admission of the divine lines of force, and finally to the recognition of their transcendent origin, the source of pure spirit—of God.

"The divine lines of force, as well as all forces thence derived, are guided in their course through infinitude by attractions and repulsions induced by polarity. All things and beings in existence, from the unimaginable atom of science to the divine Godhead Himself, are polarized, and hence endowed with attractions and repulsions. Polarity is eternal. Its indestructibility is well illustrated by the magnet.

"Take, for instance, a bar magnet, ascertain its poles, cut this magnet in two pieces, sprinkle iron filings upon the ends, and polarity will immediately be manifest, for each end of each piece will attract the filings. Proceed farther, and cut this magnet

into twenty, a hundred pieces, and each piece will immediately manifest polarity.

"We repeat and attest—for this law is the basic law of the Universe and of evolution—that polarity cannot be destroyed, or its attendant attributes, attraction and repulsion. Furthermore, there can be no attraction or repulsion without producing motion; hence, motion not only cannot cease, but, by uninterruptedly cutting endless series of divers lines of force, thereby inducing a change in the ratio of their vibrations, is the direct cause of the infinite modifications in organic as well as in inorganic life; consequentially life cannot be destroyed—life is eternal.

"The magnetic force, and electricity—its derivative—are a component, or radiation, of the divine Ray of Matter, and the momentous rôle these subforces play in all growths, in all manifestations of life, is becoming daily better understood by physical science.

"*And as it is below, so it is above; as it is on the earth, so it is in the skies; as is the microcosm, so is the macrocosm.*

"The Divinity, the spiritual Sun, the abode of which lies in the fathomless depths of infinitude, being, as we have said, the origin of all that is, of all force, material, intellectual and spiritual, is positive in polarity. The nucleus of the material Universe—a derivative of the Divinity, as will be shown—is negative; polarity exists be-

tween the two, and between them a current is constantly flowing, constituting the 'divine lines of force.' These divine lines of force, in their primal course from the Godhead to this nucleus of the material Universe, work out what is termed 'Involution,' or the Godhead becoming manifest in matter. The function of involution is to materialize worlds, peopling space. This conversion of imponderables into solids is brought to pass through a lowering in the rate of vibration of the Ray of Matter due to interferences caused by the polar currents.

"The secondary course of these divine lines of force, from the material Universe or negative pole back to the divine or positive pole, is called 'Evolution,' along the lines of which all creations and creatures, if we may so speak, in their ascending march through endless progressive processes and transformations, return to the bosom of the divine Godhead, the abode of pure Spirit, of Parabrahm, whence they sprang, and which is their final destination. The process of evolution is essentially an acceleration in the rate of vibration of the divine lines of force.

"Again we will state that all lines of force, whether emanating primarily from the Divinity or presiding over the destiny of the unimaginable atom of science, run invariably from the positive to the negative pole, where their vibratory motion is acted upon, interfered with by the specific cur-

rents always induced by polarity; and it is these currents which are the occult agents of the mysterious processes working out, through infinite transformations, the destiny of all that is. Interference with the divine lines of force, causing a decrease in the inconceivable velocity of their vibrations, has for one of its immediate effects the slow but gradual transformation into visible substances of the material essences or radiations which constitute the divine 'Ray of Matter.' Matter, in essence or radiation, becomes visible, as we have already stated, by having the number of its vibrations enormously lowered. The photosphere of our Sun, for instance, contains in gaseous state all the metals composing his satellites. A change in the vibratory motion of these gases, causing also a fall of temperature, induces their slow condensation into metalloids. Similarly the divine Ray of Matter contains in a state of essence extremely refined, all the elements of the metals composing the Universe, as well as of the forces controlling the unceasing process of their transformation into various salts, earths, plants, and living existences.

"I dwell much, and it may be deemed with unnecessary length, upon the process of these occult transformations, but they should be thoroughly understood by the disciple; therefore, I will repeat that polarity exists everywhere; every atom, every

molecule, every cell in the Universe is polarized, has its attractions and repulsions which induce motion. The Universe, then, is filled with motion. This universal motion is bound to cut an infinite number of lines of force of the most varied nature, causing in them marked vibratory changes; this induces endless transformations in matter, producing multitudinous existences, *i. e.*, life in all its phases. If there were no polarity, there would be no motion, there would be no life — death would reign universal.

"The atomic and molecular theories, corroborated by most careful experiment, uphold these statements. When atoms, through their polar attractions, conglomerate into molecules, the temperature of these molecules as well as their rate of vibration is lower than those of the original atoms. The temperature and rate of vibration of these newly formed molecules must themselves be lowered before they can be converted into the gaseous condition, and the accumulated masses of gas molecules must follow the same law, *i. e.*, a still further lowering of both temperature and rate of vibration before they can resolve themselves into liquids, and still lower grades must they reach in order to enter upon the formation of the consolidated masses of planetary materials.

"At this moment, however, it is not necessary to enter further into the theory of heat;

suffice it to say that heat, in its highest degree, at its absolute potential of vibration, or rather, when it transcends vibration, is the concomitant of the One Supreme Life, the sublime Oneness, Parabrahm.

"Thence, as one of the main factors of the divine lines of force, and with vibratory waves still at their highest potential velocity, it radiates through the infinite regions of space, there to aid in the working out of the destiny of all things, as given forth by the great and mysterious 'Fiat.'

"Absolute cold is vibration in its lowest potential, indeed, where vibration ceases its activity and constitutes the negative pole of the Universe.

"We shall presently be able to understand the function of the divine Ray of Matter. I will, however, state in addition that this Ray is called into action primordially by interferences with its rate of vibration caused by the natural currents surrounding the negative pole of the Universe. The vibrations of the Ray of Matter, although transcending human understanding, are endowed with a lower rate of velocity than either of the two other divine Rays, hence, it is the first to be affected by the counter-vibrations induced by the polar currents of the Universe, and these first interferences have the effect of causing that wonderful occult force 'Magnetism' to spring into existence.

"And now, through the infinite interconversions of its subrays—magnetism and its

consequentally, electricity—the rate of vibration of the Ray of Matter is subjected to endless interferences, causing the unmanifest to become manifest, thus gradually bringing forth the inhabitants of space, nebulæ, comets, suns, stars gradually resolving themselves into planets, upon which, in the course of time, living entities find existence and development.

"It will now readily be understood that matter is simply force reduced to a low degree of vibration, to a lower degree of temperature, to a lower potential.

"And now listen attentively to the second revelation here to follow.

"As soon as life comes into existence, such life as requires effort for its preservation, the second Ray composing the divine lines of force, the Ray of Mind, is called into action, and intellect, its principal subray, becomes manifest. Instinct, a subradiation of the intellect, is, however, first appealed to by the lowest order of animal organisms, by those possessing but a microscopical dot of brain or nerve matter. In these the necessity for nutriment begets a stress, a faint mental anxiety, perhaps. But every mental operation, however evanescent, causes the emission of vibrations or mental waves, consequently mental motion, and motion always interferes with lines of force of some kind, however feebly. In this case, the lines of force thus interfered with belonging to the realm of mind, the result

obtained is a grade of instinct, of consciousness in fact; it may be of a very low order, perhaps, but adequate to the fulfillment of the necessities, as yet very elementary, for the preservation of the life of these lower animals.

"Thus takes place the first action, the initial demand upon the Ray of Mind, and its answer thereto is the vouchsafing of instinct, of incipient consciousness.

"As living entities gradually ascend the scale of being, and in proportion as the nervous system and cerebral mass obtain in them a larger development, commensurate necessities are experienced, swifter vibratory waves are projected into the Ray of Mind, cutting more important lines of force, and a superior grade of instinct and consciousness is evolved as possessed by the higher animals.

"Still ascending on the animal scale we reach man, the later product of evolution. Here we find a nervous system with vast and delicate ramifications capable of taking cognizance of the most diversified sensations, crowned with a cerebral mass or brain able to compare these sensations, and consequently endowed with judgment. The vibrations emitted by this brain are very powerful and resolve themselves into thought-waves. These waves projected into the Ray of Mind affect its vibratory ratio in a most marked degree, the result of their interference being the production of infinitely

varied mental phenomena, from the simplest process of reasoning to the most sublime and transcendental phase of intellection and consciousness.

"As the Ray of Matter is the parent of all material manifestation in the Universe, similarly is the Ray of Mind the parent of all manifestation of mind from the lowest order of instinct to the highest degree of intellection, and these manifestations of mind are obtained through the same law of counter-vibrations as that presiding over the operations of the Ray of Matter.

"In the latter Ray, however, interferences of a comparatively low rate of vibration can effectively affect its lines of force and produce material results, while in the Ray of Mind, the vibration carrying the brain-waves into its lines of force, and capable of affecting these, are of such subtle nature, so incomprehensibly transcending in velocity, number, and quality the vibrations affecting the Ray of Matter, that they penetrate the latter Ray without in the least interfering with its vibratory motion, and this through the operation of the same law that enables man to remain unaffected while subjected to an electric current of say a hundred thousand volts pressure, while a current of five thousand volts is almost sure to kill him.

"And now it becomes our duty—a solemn one, indeed—to elucidate the mode of action of the Ray of Spirit, this sublime Ray emanating from, and, on its return road, lead-

ing directly to the center of the Spiritual Sun, the very bosom of the Infinite Father, of Parabrahm, the abode of pure spirit.

"To man alone is allotted the inestimable privilege of reaching this divine Ray, to assimilate, to appropriate, to make his own the infinite spiritual treasures therein contained. Yea, verily, to live in the radiations of this Ray, to become ever more conscious of its presence, to be steadfast in the endeavor to attain higher and higher radiations through the attunement with it of our aims and of our aspirations to reach our loftiest ideals, to constantly raise these ideals, and to ceaselessly strive to conform to them all our acts—such is the sublime destiny of man here and hereafter, until the final goal be reached—his reintegration into the bosom of the Infinite, whence he sprang, there to live in omniconsciousness, in omnipotence, as a living factor of Parabrahm, whose supercelestial attributes will have been duly earned, and will be rightfully granted.

"The divine Ray of Spirit is composed of an infinite number of subrays, radiations, and subradiations. Of these, each gives response to man's invocations or upward endeavors in accordance with their degree of worthiness, in accordance with the degree of potency of the vibrations conveying these endeavors. For, indeed, as the cords of the Æolian harp answer the breath of the zephyr, each cord giving forth its own sweet

tone in accordance with the greater or lesser intensity of such breath, similarly the innumerable components of the divine Ray of Spirit vouchsafe a willing response to every invocation, spiritual aspiration, or prayer sent up by man, each Ray, subray, or radiation giving answer when the ratio and quality of the vibratory waves that convey these spiritual endeavors are in harmony with their own vibratory potential.

"Prayers offered to God asking Him to grant material favors emanate from the brain; hence, the vibrations conveying them cannot affect the infinitely swifter and more sublimated vibrations of the Ray of Spirit, and the prayer remains unanswered, except it chances to meet in the Ray of Mind some radiation which provides an intellectual mean toward the solution or granting of the prayer.

"In the soul of man alone is vested the power of emitting vibrations able to affect the absolutely incomprehensible rate of motion even of the least of the infinite subradiations of the Ray of Spirit. The vibrations emitted by the soul, be they conveying a supplication, an aspiration, or a simple longing directed toward the Infinite, always bear the sweet characteristic of impersonality and of implied adoration.

"The soul, from the moment of her awakening in the human body—for she lies in a deathlike sleep in many—never ceases to send out tentacles through the psychic

realms, in the fond hope of encountering some radiation of the Ray of Spirit and receiving from it comfort, encouragement, and recognition.

"The soul instinctively feels that her home lies somewhere afar off, in spheres as yet unknown, and these radiations of the spirit appear to her as the highways that will eventually lead her to that home—at least she is tempted so to judge from the congeniality and happiness that overshadow her, when, in hours of liberation, she dwells in these radiations and communes with the celestial influences which they carry with them.

"'In hours of liberation,' we say, for too true it is that the soul is imprisoned in the human body, being permitted to look into the psychic world only through the medium of the intellect, which, be it large or undeveloped, is often smothered by the unwholesome auras of uncontrolled senses.

"The awakening intellect of man may open to the poor soul but a vista of witchcraft; the perverted intellect, even the horrors of an *auto-da-fe;* still, the soul, with blind faith, clings to the one noble idea uppermost in the mind of persecutors. Thus it was in the time of the Spanish inquisition, when the cruel priests honestly believed that the burning at the stake of heretics was a meritorious action. Indeed, when the dreadful ceremony was performed, they prostrated themselves before the altar,

covered their heads with ashes, and thanked God with fervor for having been selected as His humble instruments to put so many of His enemies out of the way.

"As the intellect of man develops, and a larger conception of nature is acquired, the openings to advancement offered to the soul are coordinate with the growth of the intellect. The vista embraces a wider field, faith is strengthened, aspirations grow nobler in degree as the soul realizes the existence of the higher powers presiding over nature's realms. And so the expansion or contraction of the soul, in fact her liberty, is entirely under the control of the intellect. It is true, however, that the soul is an ever-active principle, always agitated by upward urgings, which, alas! can be understood by the body that imprisons it only in degree as its brain-matter attains higher qualities. Thus in a harp, the most sublime melodies may lie dormant for years, to be awakened only by the touch of the artist whose soul is attuned to the silent whispers of the Infinite, whose brain-cells vibrate with the occult caresses of the imponderable forces of God's Universe. To such being alone is allotted the supreme privilege of drawing forth those sublime harmonies which are capable of entrancing the mind and uplifting the soul of man to the empyrean of spirit.

"When man has been normally developed; when his intellect has steadily grown

to a scientific and philosophic understanding of the laws governing the Universe, as far as these laws may be known; and if, while carrying on these investigations, his noble endeavors have succeeded in building for him a character in harmony with most lofty ideals, then, having arrived at the extreme limit of scientific knowledge as vouchsafed by the century in which he lives—then, we say, will he survey with the eye of the spirit the limitless regions of the unknown that stretch out before him into the psychic world. Fain will he project a vivid aspiration, an intense soul-breathing into the occult realms, the vibrations of which may be potent enough to reach the higher radiations of the Ray of Spirit. Then will be forthcoming moments of divine illumination, granting consciousness of Verities eternal, for during these moments of exaltation, the soul is permitted to partake of, and make her own, the boundless treasures of the supersensuous world.

"Life, for the man who has attained this stage of progress, becomes an anthem, a song of heavenly harmonies; it is replete with endeavors always upward and ceaseless climbing up the Ray of Spirit, until finally the bosom of Parabrahm is attained.

"This is the road laid out for the human soul, and this road she must pursue sooner or later; for all things in existence must follow fatally the lines of force, the lines of

evolution leading from the negative pole of the material cosmos to the positive pole of the Universe, the Spiritual Sun, or center of pure spirit."

This elucidation of the grandest natural and divine philosophy he had ever heard expressed by man, overpowered Marius with emotion, for he had listened with rapt attention. The Magus had waxed warm during the exposition of the transcendent truths he was now setting forth to his disciple. His eloquent words, conveyed in a vivifying magnetic flow, kept Marius spellbound, while in his brain was developed the highest faculty of comprehension. Desiring, however, more light upon certain points touched upon, he ventured the following inquiry:

"If it would not be lacking in respect, I should like to propose a question to my Master. The scientific world, as well as the schools of higher philosophy, is much concerned at the present time with the momentous question: 'Is man a free agent or is he not?' If man is a free agent, free to act as personal impulses may lead him, then, of course, is he responsible for the consequences of his acts; but if man is not a free agent; if his destiny has been mapped out beforehand by some higher power over which he has no control, then he cannot rightfully be held responsible for such consequences. Learned philosophers, men of high scientific attain-

ments, both earnest and desirous of knowing the truth, are found warmly advocating each side of this most momentous question. May I ask of you, Master, on which side of these schools lies the truth?"

"Such a question is highly proper, and can be answered convincingly. Now that the existence of the divine lines of force of the Universe has been demonstrated, and their function clearly laid down, it will be easily understood that man, coming into existence only when the divine lines of force have completed their involutionary function, and are launched upon the road of evolution—man, as well as all other existences, must of necessity, yea, fatally, follow these divine lines of evolutionary force, and eventually arrive at the bosom of Parabrahm, therein being reinstated with all the perfections and powers belonging to such state. Thus is the destiny of universal man.

"Progress he fatally must; no choice has he in the matter; he is no free agent here; the divine lines of evolutionary force will carry him on in spite of himself, and compel him to fulfill his transcendental destiny.

"But man can retard his progress, can temporarily neutralize the evolutionary impulse of the divine lines of force, and in this respect he is an absolutely free agent; the choice lies with himself. The divine lines of evolutionary force may be compared to a large river with calm surface and slow,

but steady flow, man being a voyager on it in the skiff of life. Destiny has given him his senses for oars, his conscience for compass, and intuition to forecast storms, approaching obstacles, or helpful breezes. Herein man is a free agent. It lies with him entirely to endeavor to follow the current of the river or not. He may choose to row directly against it, or partially so, going in any direction except straight down stream. This stream, of course, is very slow, and it takes a keen observation to discover the exact way it flows, but conscience is a sure guide, and intuition a superior master mariner.

"It is easily surmised that the man who propels his skiff up stream will in time find himself exhausted, and will discover how useless, yea, impossible, it is to pursue this fruitless, contrary course. As soon, however, as he endeavors to find an easier path, he gets nearer to the true direction of the stream. Similarly with those who take the stream crosswise; all get warning by experience and conscience, and in the course of time every human being, however much he may have wilfully or unwittingly retarded his entering upon the true course, will journey in the direction of the stream along the divine lines of evolution.

"In the general outworking of the destiny of the Universe, man is no free agent. To Parabrahm he must inevitably return by the evolutionary road. He is, however, a free

agent in his choice of helping or opposing the destiny, of hastening or retarding the end. In the universal life, man must obey the universal law; in individual life he is free to oppose this law if he choose. I must add here, however, that although man is incontrovertibly a free agent in his individual life, the absolutely free will in him lasts only one moment. To make this assertion clear to you, I must have recourse to another material illustration; and again it shall be the dynamo-electric machine.

"The armature A *(Fig. 4)*, as already known, revolves between the magnets M, and converts into electricity the magnetic lines of force running steadily between the north and south poles of this magnet. A wire W connected with the armature is wound or coiled around the body of the magnet. As soon as the armature is made to revolve, an electric current passes through this wire or coil, imparts increased magnetic power to the magnet, and multiplies its lines of force. These the armature continues to cut with the result that an increased electric current is produced to such an extent that, if not controlled, the armature itself is in danger of being destroyed by excessive heat.

"Man is the electrician in charge of his life's dynamo, the free agent, the custodian of his life's destiny. The electrician is perfectly free to let the armature of the dynamo remain at rest, and let the magnetic lines

of force move peaceably in their natural course from the north to the south pole, or he can, at his option, cause the armature to revolve and convert the magnetic force into electric force.

"Similarly is man an absolutely free agent to commit or not his first transgression of moral law. He is perfectly free to take his first glass of whisky or not to take it; to become guilty or not of a first immoral act, no impetus or momentum operating to urge him thereto; but as soon as the first transgression has been committed, man ceases to be an absolutely free agent, for by this first transgression the aptitude to transgress has been acquired, and a momentum thereby instituted. The armature has been made to revolve, the current running through the wire coiled around the magnets has increased the magnetic force in these, and in them causes to remain a residuum of force which is ever active; in man it urges him incessantly to repeat the transgression, henceforward he ceases to be an absolutely free agent. In the dynamo-electric machine, this residuum or artificially created force can be eradicated only by sending an inverse current through the poles. So, too, in man, the momentum of a newly acquired habit can only be destroyed by a strong and continued effort of the will. If the pernicious habit be of long existence, occult means of a highly religious nature must be employed; while in the

physical realm there must be introduced into the blood new particles which, when carried to the brain, have the property of giving tone to its relaxed texture, thereby neutralizing the residuary force that urges to the continuation of the pernicious habit. Is this explanation clear to you?"

"It is, Most Revered Master, and I am very thankful for the elucidation of this problem so important to the welfare of man."

"In continuation of our previous discourse, I will say that it is proper to state here that there is another mode of reaching certain radiations of the Ray of Spirit, and of obtaining therefrom relative spiritual powers like those of healing, or helping in an efficacious manner undeveloped brethren on the upward road, although the devotee may not himself be possessed of a large intellect; and this mode is the consecrating of the whole life, the entire being, to the cult of the Spirit, through fervent prayer, adoration, the overcoming of the allurements of the senses and an absolute detachment from the things of earth. In such a life the intellect, as well as all other faculties, is made subservient to the highest aim, to the unfolding of the spiritual nature of man. In this devotee, the intellect will await development in a future state; for the intellect of every individual must, at some period, reach its apogee of expansion. Without such development, the apocalypse

of the most sublime truths, borne on the wings of the divine Ray of Spirit, would remain unintelligible to him; he would enjoy the never-ending spiritual feasts of the supersensuous world in the same manner as an uninitiate of to-day enjoys a spectacular performance in a theater, admiring one dissolving view after another, but remaining ignorant of the scientific processes which produce the wonderful effects that afford him so much delight. This is the spiritual development aimed at in convent and cloister—spiritual development vouchsafed in response to intense religious faith.

"The divine mysteries that have lately been revealed for the first time to the world, have been kept in absolute secrecy until the present day by the Magi, for the reason before stated, namely, that humanity was not ready to consider the profound philosophical statements just set forth. The scientist and the philosopher of to-day, these leaders of the human mind, however, are fully prepared to adopt the new line of thought, and the way thereto has already been paved by the most advanced thinkers among them. We are aware that many unlearned, good and honest souls, whose loftiness of conception does not transcend the anthropomorphic God—the God-man—will pass by our sacred revelations, and perhaps consider them impious. For these we have not one word of reproach. From the

beginning of the world every tribe, every nation, has had a conception of a God in harmony with the development of their intellectual faculties, from the God of the African, carved in wood, before whom the native falls prostrate, asking for rain when drought desolates his home—a god whom he drags in the dust, with a rope around the neck, when rain does not come at the time expected—thence through numerous stages of evolution (for evolution obtains even in these gods of humanity) up to the anthropomorphic gods of Islamism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Christianity. For the gods of all these creeds we have respect, and, for the last mentioned ones, deep reverence, inasmuch as they are made the embodiment of the highest ideals of their worshipers, and, being vested by them with the most perfect attributes they can conceive, are undoubtedly powerful instruments at work in the elaboration of true humanitarian progress. Far be it from us to disturb any of the established religions or creeds, for our sincere sympathies lie with all beliefs having an upward tendency, an elevating aspiration, and our blessing rests upon them all, for in God's own time they will reach the more lofty planes of evolution. Our greatest concern lies, however, with the honest materialist, the man of science, who, with scalpel and crucible, microscope and atomic balance, telescope and spectroscope, searches for God by the ana-

lytical method, and fails to find him; with the student whose earnest endeavor, by aid of the midnight oil, tries to discover the origin of force, of man's faculties, of thought, and who arrives, through unbiased investigation, at the sad conclusion that all forces, of whatever nature, originate in matter, as well as all faculties of man. 'No liver, no bile,' says he; 'no glands, no secretion; and no brain, no thought. All life and exhibition of life are the results of material conditions. The planets move and develop and mature according to well-known laws. All power is inherent in matter; above matter we find nothing but fanciful speculations, dreams, sometimes brilliant, enticing, bewitching even, but dreams, nevertheless, and as such unworthy to be given hospitality by the intellect.'

"To these honest men, men loving science for the sake of science itself, men without illusion or imagination, adhering firmly to, and drawing conclusions from, elements which they can weigh, carve, feel, see, hear, which come fully under the senses of the body—to these good men we would fain say: 'Higher, brothers, a little higher.' We would call the attention of such to the rôle which vibrations play in the world of imponderable forces, and bid them investigate it; to them we would commend the perusal of the revelations now for the first time given to the world; and we feel confident that scientific endeavors in this new

line of investigation will soon open a vista to the soul of the materialist, and cause her to chant an exultant '*Gloria in Excelsis*,' which will send a thrill of happiness through his entire being. It will pour upon him a baptismal shower of new and encouraging vibrations from above destined to awaken within him responsive cords, the spiritualizing harmony of which had lain dormant, and of the possession of which he had hitherto remained unconscious.

"You should now, my dear brother, be able to fully realize the momentous rôle of vibration, not only in life, but through the entire Universe; that all phenomena in the material world take place through vibrations infinitely varied in their mode and motion; that by means of vibrations all forces are transmitted, and operate in nature; that of the workings of these forces we obtain daily proofs; that forces of greater potentiality are periodically discovered by science—all this conclusively demonstrating that there must be a source somewhere from which all these forces emanate. Surely, this source, the origin of all force, of all power, of omnipotence, in fact, lies in the bosom of Parabrahm.

"Furthermore, inasmuch as we have indubitable proof of the existence of various grades of intellect, from that of the Hottentot to those of the crowned heads of the philosophic and scientific schools of to-day, we have incontrovertible proof that greater intellect can be acquired by the earnest devotee in

direct ratio to his efforts. Similarly, there must exist the source of absolute intellection, of omniscience, which must dwell somewhere; and, truly, it does so dwell in the bosom of Parabrahm, the Supreme Mind.

"Thirdly, as proofs are daily vouchsafed to us of the existence of relative good and love, that good and love may be unfolded through cultivation and practice, so the source of the highest good, of the highest love, that is, absolute good, absolute love, must exist somewhere, and, indeed, such source exists in Parabrahm.

"Parabrahm, or the Divine Godhead, is, therefore, the central source of pure force—Omnipotence; of mind or pure intellection —Omniscience; of absolute love or pure Spirit.

"These are the attributes of Parabrahm, the Divine Trinity, one and indivisible. They constitute the Supreme Spiritual Sun, whose Rays, the divine lines of force, illumine and penetrate all that is. Of these divine attributes, man may partake at his option, for it cannot be too often repeated that the divine lines of force which convey all the divine qualities, permeate man. In order to make these qualities his own, give them a home within himself, what he has to do is to place his individuality within the currents of the lines of force, place obstacles in their way, interferences with their march, thereby compelling them to tarry with him. As Franklin compelled an elec-

tric current to descend from the clouds by offering an appropriate conductor, and thus became possessor of the force—so it is with man. If he projects vibrations into the psychic world with a ratio of motion sufficiently rapid and of the proper quality to be in harmony with some radiations of the divine lines of force, these radiations must answer, and a current must come from them to man, a current conveying the spiritual qualities of the radiations. These man can make his own if he choose. Ever ascending from subradiation to radiation, from radiation to subray, from subray to Ray, each higher state attained becoming a new center of force for the projection of more powerful, more sublimated vibrations, thus making his own ever higher qualities, the great consummation will finally be achieved — reintegration into Parabrahm, there to be one with him, and command, as one who has duly earned them, all the attributes of the Deity."

"Venerable Master, the system of cosmogony explained in the papyri is most sublime indeed; they refer, however, exclusively to Rays of Force as constituting God or Parabrahm, and to one of those Rays as being the Ray of divine consciousness—is there then no personal God?"

"My son, there is no consciousness without coexisting and correlative personality. If one becomes conscious of a certain fact—abstract idea, or material object—it is his

personality that is the recipient of such consciousness. God, or Parabrahm, therefore, being the source, the alpha and omega, of all consciousness, must also be the beginning and goal of all personalities, every one of which originates from and ends in Him the supreme or absolute personality. Hence, to answer thy question, I say that God is the acme, the supreme degree of personality, a person in the most sublime sense. What the form of that personality is, transcends our conception in this our mundane state. When man shall have arrived at that stage of evolution which he is to occupy hereafter in the spheres, and in which his immensely enlarged vision and apprehension will enable him to comprehend the Universe in its entirety as well as the universality of the being composing it, then he will, perhaps, be able to grasp the immensity of God's personality. 'God is all that is.'"

"The explanation is most lucid and convincing, venerable Master; pray continue your instruction so intensely interesting."

"Over the world of matter, man has little control. The lines of divine force radiate from the bosom of Parabrahm, the supreme positive pole of all that is, the absolute potential of vibration, and consequently of heat. Thence they run into the vastness of infinitude toward the lowest potential of vibration, absolute cold, the primordial negative pole of the Universe. These divine

lines of force constitute, as we have stated before, the lines of involution through which God becomes manifest in the form of matter. These lines, in degree as they proceed further from the divine Godhead and approach the primordial negative pole, undergo a lowering of their rate of vibration, caused by the interferences of the currents always surrounding a pole, and in this case, also, by the inconceivably low degree of cold of these currents.

"Heat is not the proper term for the highest sublimation of temperature caused by vibratory motion at its absolute potential, but it is the only term that, in our actual condition of knowledge, may convey the idea to the understanding. Similarly, the term 'absolute cold' is used to convey the meaning of lowest potential of vibration.

"As a consequence of these most potent interferences of the polar currents, the vibratory motion of certain of these lines of force is so reduced as to make them perceptible to the senses of man; they become manifest and appear in the shape of nebulæ, comets, stars, suns, planets, upon the last man finding his abode in due course of time. Thus around this primordial negative pole of the Universe the cosmos is called into existence, gradually unfolding its wonderful galaxies which to-day so brilliantly illuminate the heavens."

"Dear Master, I would respectfully ask for further elucidation in regard to the posi-

tion of this negative pole of the Universe of which you speak. I can readily understand the existence of the Spiritual Sun as the origin from which emanate the divine lines of force. But these, as the papyri state, run to the negative pole; where is this negative pole? I have an intense desire to gain comprehension of this sublime system of cosmogony."

"Most cheerfully will I endeavor to give thee a lucid explanation of it," responded the Magus, "for the question is a legitimate one.

"The whole system of the Universe, in its totality and in all its individual units, from the minute cells that constitute all organized bodies, up to the most stupendous structures, suns and worlds, is spherical in form. From the Spiritual Sun, which is the positive pole, radiate lines of force in every direction. To render this clear we will have recourse to a material illustration—our Earth. Suppose the Spiritual Sun were located in the center of it, and its light radiated in all directions toward the outer crust of the earth, this outer crust, corresponding with the outer membrane of the cell, would represent the region of the negative pole of the Universe—an immense region, indeed, where so-called cold reaches its lowest degree. Hence this negative pole is not a point, but a circumferential region where polar currents have their abode. In this region the divine lines of force first

meet with interference and resistance, and the Ray of Matter, whose rate of vibration is lower than those of the other two Rays, is first affected. Materialization and condensation into worlds are the results. The limitless space beyond this region is being gradually and continuously invaded by new worlds, incessantly springing into existence under the same process of interference by polar currents. The region of involutionary activity increases in proportion as the inhabitable region of the cosmos is enlarged. The effect of one of these enormous polar currents is illustrated in the 'Milky Way,' where numberless new worlds are in process of construction."

"This system of cosmogony, beloved Master, is truly wonderful and grand, and the teaching of it is of most momentous import. For the first time has the formation of worlds (a subject which has occupied my deepest thought) become clear to me. The workings of God, the true God, are brought within the reach of man's comprehension, if man is willing to learn. The honest materialist can now conscientiously join in the worship of God, and will recognize that such worship will be an incontrovertible proof for the enlargement of his mind and the elevation of his intellect."

CHAPTER IX.

"For the present," resumed Gaspar, "we will proceed no further in the scientific exposition of the Deity and its attributes. Numberless elucidations of cosmic phenomena are, however, given in these papyri, but, as yet, the world is unprepared to receive them. What has been vouchsafed for thee to hear is deemed sufficient to offer a scientific basis of true religion, and a religious foundation to true science.

"And now I will relate how it came to pass that these papyri, of such surpassing importance, came to be deposited in the archives of the Roman Catholic Papacy, the impressive scene of their recovery from oblivion having been presented to thee in last night's vision.

"The greatest of Egypt's Hierophants, seeing with the undimmed eyes of the advanced occultist the hopeless condition of materiality into which his country had sunk, and despairing of being able for centuries at least to rekindle a spark of spirituality in the sensual lives of his people; seeing, moreover, that the High Priests surrounding him had gradually lost interest in the scientific possessions of the order, the Sovereigns and people being too igno-

rant to understand them; and that these High Priests, in order to keep in check the ever-increasing sensuality of these same Sovereigns and people, were devoting their efforts entirely to the production of occult phenomena of the most overawing nature, he decided to transfer to more propitious fields the mysterious and transcending truths of which he had become possessed, as custodian of the occult lore transmitted to him by the Hierophant and Magus, his predecessor. To find this more propitious field, he retired to the holy chamber of the Great Pyramid, and, reposing his body upon the sacred couch before the shrine, assumed his higher supersensuous life. He then began to explore the cities situated on the trans-Mediterranean littoral, where, rumor said, a new religion had sprung into existence, the dogmas of which had been consecrated by the death of many martyrs, thereby winning over to the creed earnest devotees, whose number was constantly increasing.

"Above the City of Rome he beheld a great light, and upon close investigation found it to be the golden radiance of Spirituality in the midst of which was a brilliant nucleus, like that of a comet. It proceeded from a small group of men assembled in a council hall. They were, seemingly, men of authority, and to one of the number great respect was shown by the others. The matter under discussion was the prevailing

materialism, the unbounded reign of unbridled sensuality, the Godlessness of the period, and the measures to be adopted in order to promote a better life. They recognized that in the cultivation of the attributes of the soul lay the only means of overcoming sensuality, and that supreme faith in God, the Ruler of all that is, was the first principle to be proclaimed. Next to this, the necessity for strong and more extended brotherhood among men should be made prominent. How to disseminate most effectively these truths among the people was being fully discussed.

"After having been present at several councils of similar import and tendency, the Hierophant concluded that these leaders of the comparatively new sect had in themselves all the elements necessary to understand, accept, and proclaim the sacred truths of the occult order of which he was, as he then thought, the last representative. Some of these men were possessed of much scientific and occult learning, and would be fit recipients of the solemn trust. He fervently desired to be translated to his home above, owing to the fact that his life here below was a life of much suffering, caused by the constant stream of a low order of vibrations which had encountered him whenever he ventured outside the Sanctuary of the Pyramid.

"To Rome, therefore, the Hierophant at last wended his way in his natural body.

Inclosed in a large golden casket which he carried with him was a roll of papyri, which he evidently regarded as a most precious trust, to judge from the care, amounting almost to veneration, with which he handled it. Directing his steps to the building where he had seen the worthy men in assembly, he there met the Pope of Rome, for the person to whom the members of the council had shown high respect was none other than the head of the Christian church at that epoch.

"A most venerable and learned man was he, of imposing mien, but most simple in manner withal. He was a thorough mystic, having become such by a profound study of the works of the occultists of old, principally of the Chaldean mysteries, which, owing to their being based upon science, more particularly interested him.

"Well was he prepared to receive the Hierophant and understand the vast import of his mission. As they met, their auras interblended, and they instantly understood each other, and mutual confidence was at once established.

"For many days they dwelt together in unison, during which time the Pope was thoroughly instructed in the import of the hieroglyphic works submitted to him and henceforth intrusted to his care and keeping. He solemnly promised forthwith that their contents should form the basis of his religion, being in full harmony with the

principles proclaimed by their Leader when alive—Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified.

"The contents of the sacred papyri being mostly of a scientific and occult nature, the council of High Priests was convened by the Pope to deliberate on the use to be made of them. After several meetings it was concluded to formulate and promulgate articles of faith, belief in which would be obligatory on all followers of Christ. This was a necessary proceeding, inasmuch as the early Christians, being mostly uneducated, were unable to understand scientific and deeply occult reasoning. These articles of faith were to be impressed on the minds of the devotees by means of divers ceremonies intended to appeal to the emotions, thereby rendering faith more earnest and enduring.

"The ceremony of Holy Mass was then first established, and was suggested by the following rite described in the sacred papyri: Once a year, at a designated time, when planetary conditions are most conducive to spiritual influx, the Hierophant, surrounded by his High Priests, after nine days' abstinence, repaired to the Sanctuary of the Pyramid. There, at high noon, when celestial influences are most potent, he consecrated a large loaf of pure gluten, this substance, when kept in the sacred shrine, retaining for a period of twelve moons the aura of Parabrahm. By concentrating the will on this loaf while directing to Parabrahm prayers, recitation of manthrams, and

deeply occult invocations, his aura thoroughly impregnated it with pure Spirit. Once a year, all the priests, initiates, candidates, and neophytes partook of the consecrated loaf at the epoch of the year designated at a later date as Easter by the Christian church, after having duly prepared themselves by fasting for a period of seven times seven days, of which nine days were dedicated to special prayer and ceremonies during which fasting was not required.

"This communion with Parabrahm, by partaking of the consecrated loaf, was most efficacious in uplifting all who were admitted to this sacrament. Mind and soul being appropriately prepared, this aura long remained with the recipient, extending to him peaceful spiritual help, and enabling him to advance a step higher up the ascent leading to the Supreme. With the priests this aura remained about twelve moons; with the High Priests it abided forever; the Hierophant was one with it.

"The initiates of the second degree, candidates and neophytes, when lacking spiritual strength, could be permitted to partake of the sanctified loaf at any time of the year.

"The ceremonies attending the consecration of the loaf were directed against the domination exercised by the senses. A cross surmounted the shrine, to which the carved image of a man was fastened by

wooden nails, one driven through the hand of each extended arm, and one through both feet, nailing them together to the vertical beam of the cross. Upon the head of the figure was a crown of thorny wood, and the exposed heart was bleeding; before the lips a spectral hand, beautifully shaped, held a cup of exceedingly bitter beverage. The occult meaning of this image was that the empire by the senses over man must be overcome by suffering and mortification of the flesh. The head and brain must be sorely disciplined, the heart must bleed, and the tongue be made to feel how bitter are the sorrows it may entail. The conjoint suffering and rigid discipline of head, heart, hands, and feet, are necessary to effect an efficient control over the lower nature of man.

"During the ceremony of consecration, when the extended hands of the Hierophant covered the loaf, and he recited the mystic formula of invocation, a large metallic gong was made to give forth its deep, soft note, the vibrations of which penetrated to the inmost recesses of the human soul, arousing in it a powerful spiritual activity. This note was the mysterious key-note of the Universe, as given forth by the ocean in its perpetual moan; by the large forest, when the breeze sighs in its bowers at eve; as heard in the distant murmur of large cities, when above them hover the wings of night.

"The Rosary, or string of beads, in use by the Roman Catholic devotees, and also

their recital of divers litanies and rogations, are substitutes for other vehicles for prayer employed by Eastern mystics, and now called by the somewhat sarcastic name of 'prayer-machines,' objects of much ridicule on the part of the modern skeptic. Nevertheless, in the light of the new science, their usefulness is readily conceded. The long-continued repetition of the same ratio and tone of vibration begets a potential in the psychic realm, sufficient to cause a decided interference with the swift passage of some radiation of the Ray of Spirit, compelling it to tarry on its way and to grant to man the spiritual enlightenment or consolation sought for by the oft-repeated prayers. The Rosary acts like an electric battery, each bead, by adding a cell to the current, increasing its potential. High Priests recognized the fact that without the intervention of numerous beads, or the repeated revolutions of the prayer-machine, the attention of the supplicant could not remain undisturbed, but would fluctuate between heterogeneous thought-waves that are ever floating in air. Hence would ensue the emission of vibration of inconstant quality, inefficient to project effectual interferences into the Ray of Spirit.

"The Roman Catholic monasteries are instituted in imitation of those of ancient Egypt, presided over by our order, a description of which is set forth in these sacred papyri. The object of the founding

of the Trappist order, for instance, with its very severe rules of discipline, fasting, bodily castigation, the observance of silence, constant vigils, was to afford effective help to devotees whose senses have kept a mastery sway over them; the isolation in which the members of the society are kept in the monasteries frees them from all outside temptations and allurements of the world.

"One of the mysteries, the importance of which was fully realized by the Egyptian priesthood of our order, is that the neophyte, and in truth every man or woman who essays earnestly to tread the upward path, is beset by constant and exceptional dangers. The senses, the despotism of which it is the first duty to overcome—a duty requiring most fervent endeavor—rebel violently against any intrusion into their rightful domain, and on this occasion the papyri divulge a most deep occult truth which will ere long be fully corroborated by science. The spiritualizing of the brain-cells, their growth and evolution, granulation, palingenesy or rebirth, progress mostly at the expense of cells of a lower order. A cell, in process of evolution through the urgings and action of higher forces, absorbs the vital energy of its antipolar cells, which are always of lower development. This process of absorption produces in the latter cells a vibratory excitement, a battle for dear life, as it were, a rebellion against being gradually atrophied, causing their exist-

ence to be strongly felt. In the case of brain-cells undergoing the process of spiritualization, they emit vibratory waves drawing forth the energy of their antipolar cells which govern the animal or sensual nature of man. The latter become excited, with the result that a powerful appeal for recognition is produced, culminating in an unceasing clamor for satisfaction. If the will of the neophyte be not strong, or he neglects to summon help from above through prayer, or is not provided with a talisman, a serious fall may be the consequence, followed, sometimes, by a total abandonment of the path. Nor are instances rare wherein people with decided spiritual tendencies, even after having published meritorious works on occultism or spiritualism, have stumbled by the wayside and fallen into the path of shame. To avoid this fall, to guard the neophyte, during his period of weakness, against the powerful assaults with which the lower senses incessantly harass him, monasteries have been established, within the walls of which temptation doth not enter, and before the shrine of which spiritual strength is ever ready to be granted. Herein lies the origin of convent and cloister, and the safeguard which they afford to the neophyte is well-nigh indispensable to him.

"The order of priests, as set forth in these papyri, had its neophytes, candidates, and priests of the third, second, and first

degree. It was an order of most learned men, who studied the sciences with great earnestness, aided both by occult illumination and worldly mechanical means, living in their monasteries undisturbed by secular cares, which were assumed by lay brothers. The highest spiritual attainments were vouchsafed to these men, and from their ranks one was exalted to the dignity of Hierophant, or Magus. This order in the Roman Catholic church is represented by the Jesuits. As to how true they have remained to the spirit of the order of the Egyptian priests the world must pass judgment. For the sake of justice, however, which, under all circumstances, must be respected, I have to state that many American fathers of that society have progressed spiritually far beyond the ken of the ordinary world; and if to-day they decline to discuss the advanced ideas of religion and occultism, they do so merely through the necessity of remaining obedient to the exaction of a terrible oath taken with their vows, and not because their convictions or sympathies lie with the unprogressive.

"The confession of sins, as practiced in the Roman church, the absolution bestowed by the priest, and consequent admission to holy communion, are also derived from the avowal of weakness made by the neophyte or candidate to a High Priest, when seeking for help after a fall, and counsel in his struggle for spiritual growth; upon true repent-

ance such neophyte was admitted to partake anew of the consecrated loaf, and was restored to divine grace. This practice gave a fresh impetus, a powerful stimulant, to his soul's upward efforts.

"In addition, many minor exoteric religious ceremonies, having deep occult meaning in reference to externalization of the Egyptian mysteries, have been adopted by the Romish church. Although, at the present time, such ceremonies are but imperfectly understood by the clergy and church-goers, they are, nevertheless, endowed with real spiritual power.

"The scapulary, however, is the most potent of all the occult safeguards that were adopted by the Pope and council. Much impressed, indeed, was the latter, by the description which these papyri give of the far-reaching occult powers possessed by the talismans consecrated by the Hierophant. It is related in these documents that the most powerful talisman consists of two square pieces of cloth connected by two cords, so arranged that when the head of the devotee is passed between them one piece of cloth will rest on the back, and the other cover the breast. Upon the covering on the back it was imperative that the All-seeing Eye, surrounded by radiations, should be embroidered, and upon the front one the image of Sophia, the Virgin of the World. The pieces of cloth composing the scapulary represent in form the insignia of the

sacred office of the Hierophant, which were two squares of cloth of gold worn by him above his vestments, one in front and the other on the back. Upon them were embroidered, in addition to the above-mentioned figures, strange hieroglyphics, the front ones representing the forces surrounding the negative pole of the Universe, the one covering the back, the Spiritual Sun, or Parabrahm, the supreme positive pole. When duly consecrated by the assembled Magi, divine lines of force ran constantly from the positive to the negative pole, traversing the solar plexus and the most vital parts of the wearer's body, neutralizing their lowering tendencies, and surrounding the brain with such strong, purified aura as to leave it uninfluenced by external promptings or impressions of an animal nature.

"The scapulary, or talisman, being kissed night and morning by the devotee, thereby constantly renewing the intimate relation by thought-projection between himself and the powers invoked during the consecration, proved effective not only in guarding him against the wiles of evil, but never ceasing to administer to his spiritual nature, steadily urging him on to upward growth.

"The scapulary worn by Catholic youth has itself great occult powers, and numberless are the instances that have come under my own observation, during my ministry, of the influence exercised by it. I have known calamities to individuals and families to be

averted; great blessings to be bestowed; confiding souls of many to be rescued from the snares of the tempter, and others even from the quagmire of sensuality.

"During my pastorate I visited many public hospitals, both in Europe and India, and whenever I met a fallen woman, often finding her upon her deathbed, I never omitted to inquire if she had her scapulary or talisman on her person at the moment of her first fall. The answer was invariably the same. They all admitted that at the time when they had given way to the seductions of the tempter, they had either abandoned wearing it or had temporarily laid it aside. In no single instance did I discover that a girl had fallen a prey to the seducer, had lacked strength to resist him, while the scapulary was on her body. This safeguard, borrowed by the Catholic church from occult orders of Egypt, has rendered, and is still rendering, immeasurable spiritual service to its devotees. Before proceeding to explain the adaptation by the Romish church to her religious service of the occult mysteries and observances set forth in the sacred papyri, I must, for clearness' sake, briefly consider again the primordial system of the Universe, in order to make plain the origin of the extensive worship paid to the Virgin Mary by the devotee of that church."

CHAPTER X.

"THE manner is now well understood in which the divine lines of force proceed from the Spiritual Sun, the origin of every force in its highest potential of vibration and temperature, to the negative pole or lowest potential of vibration and absolute cold. On their way to this negative pole, these divine lines of force, in their involutionary course, are constantly interfered with by the polar currents, their ratio of vibration and temperature, through this action, being constantly lowered, until, near the negative pole, the interferences become so potent as to cause their velocity to be reduced to such an extent as to render matter visible, first, in the form of nebulæ and comets, and then tangible, when these have been condensed into worlds. The currents of the negative pole, however, affect the Ray of Mind and the Ray of Spirit, as well as the Ray of Matter, for the three main Rays constituting the divine lines of force, being intervolved, are one and indivisible. In degree as the polar currents interfere with the rapidity of the vibrations of the Ray of Matter, equally so do they interfere with those of the Ray of Mind and those of the Ray of Spirit, and the interferences with

the ratio of vibratory velocity of these latter Rays also beget in them subrays, radiations, and subradiations, many of which can be obtained by man when planets reach conditions appropriate to his abode on them.

"Hence, the Ray of Matter, by the action of the polar currents, becoming differentiated into visible, and, later on, into tangible matter, is followed by the Ray of Mind, which becomes similarly differentiated into all grades of intellect, from instinct of the lowest order, as possessed by the animal with a single microscopical dot of brain-matter, up to the most powerful intellects of the world. Plants and the lower organisms of the animal kingdom, such as infusoria and other series without brain-specks, move by attraction and repulsion only. The same process of differentiation obtains in the Ray of Spirit, from the subradiation that answers the first prayer of the babe whose little hands are upheld by the mother, to the subray that conveys divine illumination to the brain of the Magus. All the differentiations originate at the negative pole of the Universe, where involution ceases, and evolution commences its grand career. There, also, parallel with the differentiation of the qualities of the Supreme Mind and Infinite Spirit, are developed the gradations of universal consciousness, from the faint consciousness possessed by the lowest grade of instinct,

to the supreme consciousness of things divine. These gradations may be grouped into the three following states or classes, namely: the simple consciousness of existence, consciousness of understanding, and consciousness of things spiritual.

"The latter consciousness is imaged in these papyri by the divine Sophia, the Virgin of the World. Virgin she is called, because the radiations into which the Ray of Spirit is differentiated (many radiations of which are attainable by man) are purely virgin, emanating as they do directly from Parabrahm, through the lines of involution. Having never yet passed through the brain of man, they are consequently unsullied by any influence that heterogeneous thought-waves might impress upon it.

"The divine Sophia, or Virgin of the World, then, represents divine consciousness in its differentiated condition of applicability to man. Of that consciousness man may partake in degree as he succeeds in sending up into its transcendental realm effective vibratory interferences.

"But let it be well understood that the vibrations which he sends up, in order to reach effectively the realm of divine consciousness, even in its lowest differentiated subradiation, must proceed from the soul, for brain-vibration entirely fails to come in touch with, and cause interference with, any radiation of spirit consciousness. Prayer, spiritual aspiration, acts of adora-

tion, springing from profound faith in the Supreme Being, love, vivid love of things divine, crowned by a pure and charitable life—these are the qualities and practices which bring down upon us abundant showers of divine Sophia's choicest gift, the consciousness of things divine.

"And now we will proceed to relate how it came to pass that the Romish church became possessed of its greatest pillar of strength, the rock upon which is built its edifice—'*Et super hanc petram edificabo ecclesiam meam.*'

"The Pope and his council fully prepared, both scientifically and spiritually, to understand the surpassing importance of the part allotted to divine consciousness in the evolution of man, at once proceeded on their course in the true spirit of holiness. The Pontiff selected by the Hierophant to become the guardian of the sacred papyri, was a true son of God, and competent to devise ways and means of bringing the realization of this divine consciousness to the undeveloped but trusting minds of their devotees. Furthermore, he had the ability to prescribe for them the simplest and best regulations to be adopted in order to reach this consciousness, and thereby obtain the choicest blessings it could vouchsafe.

"It was decided, therefore, to clothe Mary, the Mother of the Crucified, with all the attributes of the divine Sophia, and place her image before the devotees. It was, however,

distinctly stated that worship was not to be offered to Mary as a divinity, but that she was to be regarded solely as a powerful mediator before the divine throne.

"This decision of Pope and council was a real inspiration from on high, for the good done by the myriads of invocations daily sent up by the Roman Catholic devotees to the divine consciousness, to them imaged by the Blessed Virgin, is far beyond the powers of realization, even by the high dignitaries of that church to-day.

"No disciple can enter upon the upward path," continued Gaspar solemnly, "until all prejudices in the matter of religion have been obliterated in him. Every creed, belief, congregation, church, association, and individual man, in their upward endeavors, must not only be respected by him, but his good-will at least must be directed toward them, if his open encouragement cannot be bestowed. Ill-feeling in the smallest degree against any church would fatally paralyze his own progress.

"Our order, as yet, has no temple or monastery in this country, and until one is proffered, our main reliance must lie in the existing churches for an occasional revival of spiritual strength. Similarly with a musician; it matters not how excellent his private rehearsals may be; how efficient his daily practice; how earnest his endeavors, while in his studio, to reach higher attainments in his art; he must, at intervals,

listen to the symphonies of superior artists, in order, as it were, to rebaptize his soul, to open new avenues to loftier inspiration. Likewise must the disciple, at intervals, repair to temples of worship, there to receive strength for the practice of greater purification; to sanctuaries where strife entereth not; where psychic force is abundant, and the spiritual conditions harmonious enough to enable the soul to place herself in affinity with, and receive spiritual strength from, the divine afflatus there present.

"Our monastery, when established, will be open as a place of occasional retreat to our disciples whenever they feel a renewal of spiritual strength necessary. In the monastery will be a sanctuary and a shrine, blessed by the Supreme Master, or Magus.

"And there the image of Sophia, the Divine Virgin of the World, the occultist will also find enthroned. No worship is bestowed on this image any more than on the images or photographs of our dear departed while our eyes lovingly linger upon them. No, they simply recall to memory the good qualities of those now in another sphere, establishing an affectionate bond between them and us. Similarly, the invocations formulated at the feet of Sophia reach the divine consciousness she represents, and places us in affinity with it.

"Until this building is erected, toward some church our disciple must direct his steps. Surely he will be able to discover a

place of worship in harmony with his soul's aspirations. A sign will certainly be given him, for in answer to his earnest supplication will he feel a guiding influx from above; that is the sign.

"These psychic conditions exist in some of our Jewish synagogues and Protestant temples, but more prevalently in many of the Catholic churches. The latter, being open to worship daily, from morn till nightfall, offer opportunities for prayer not found in other places of religious meeting; hence these churches have always before their altar a number of devotees whose professions of faith constantly fortify the psychic aura ever abiding within the church. In many synagogues is felt a strong religious atmosphere caused by intense faith, but that high psychic condition which loftiness of aspiration alone can induce seems often to be wanting. The psychic power in many of the Protestant temples is small; especially so is the abode of those creeds where intellectuality has taken precedence over faith. In some temples, however, where devotees assemble who have preserved the faith of old, the psychic force is strong. If those temples would keep open doors during week days, so that the psychic emanations produced during the Sabbath services might constantly receive reinforcements through the prayers of the daily attending devotees, they would be excellent places for the disciple to repair to in time of

spiritual need, and there would he receive comfort.

"Some Catholic churches, though not in all of them, by any means, save in those presided over by priests of living faith, whose lives are entirely consecrated to the worship of God and the salvation of humanity, both material and spiritual—such churches are the abiding-places of the Spirit of the Infinite. Such priests assuredly impregnate the virgin gluten, or Host, with aura of the Heavenly Father, there to abide as long as burns the occult fire before the tabernacle. The occult power of a consecrated flame to retain in activity the object of the prayer for which the consecration was made, is so great that its import can hardly be realized outside the circle of initiated occultists. When a prayer is uttered before the image of Sophia, the Virgin of the World (in Catholic churches represented by the Blessed Virgin), and if a candle be lighted before that image every day for nine consecutive days, that prayer will undoubtedly be granted, if its scope be legitimate and its solution lie within the psychic realm; yea, verily, spiritual aid will be accorded."

"Master, if I were permitted to express an opinion, it would be that the invitation to Protestants, Hebrews, Free-Thinkers, or Materialists, to repair to the Catholic churches for the purpose of praying before the altar of the Blessed Virgin, is likely to

meet decided opposition. With much difficulty will they be brought to understand that this Virgin, to the occultist, is simply the divine Sophia imaging the first radiation of divine consciousness that can be assimilated by man."

"Most true is thy suggestion, my son. The advanced occultist, however, will hesitate but a moment, for readily will he realize the great succor to be derived from Sophia. She alone is the dispenser of divine consciousness, the rays of which we must reach if we would gain spiritual growth. Prayers addressed directly to that consciousness will, undoubtedly, be highly beneficial; it is difficult, however, for the disciple to concentrate the mind upon mere invisible, impalpable consciousness, and the vibrations which these prayers emit are vascillating, weak, and may easily be deviated from their intended course by intruding thoughts. On the other hand, when the image of Sophia is before the disciple, upon it his mind may rest, and his prayers be carried in unwavering vibrations to the divine consciousness which Sophia represents.

"Furthermore, the image of Sophia in Catholic churches is surrounded by such powerful aura or odic atmosphere, the result of numberless demonstrations of faith performed during a long succession of years, that it acts like an electric battery adding its potential to the vibratory current conveying the prayer of the disciple.

"Before the image of Sophia in every city will be found the occultist who desires to become a true child of God, and before that image (and primarily in the Catholic churches) will he or she receive the 'Word' which will be vouchsafed to the devotee elected to preside over the first temple or sanctuary to be instituted in each locality. No, my son, stay thy misgivings; the earnest students of the sacred mysteries have, one and all, been sadly disappointed by the several schools of mysticism which promised occult powers of the most varied degree to those of their votaries who would strive either to strengthen their will, or proceed to starve their bodies, or study the mystical literature of the Hindoo, so utterly obscure as to have given birth to many sects actually professing the most bewildering metaphysics; or practice Yoga until the brain reels, and visions are beheld by the disciple—visions produced by the same process of hyper-excitation as those developed by prolonged alcoholic intoxication. All these sadly disappointed students, having failed to find peace, will go to Sophia, and if they rest their hopes and burdens and fears at her feet, with faith and confidence, and light a candle, where candles are habitually kept before her altar, and if they follow this course for nine consecutive days, they will obtain a peace of soul, a feeling of rest, of safety,

and of trust, conveying the assurance that the way has been found at last.

"As soon as a temple shall have been consecrated in a city, no longer will our devotee proceed to the Catholic churches, for in his own Sanctuary, wherein will be enthroned the image of Sophia, will he find a psychic atmosphere powerful and pure, which will enforce his prayer and carry it triumphantly to the divine consciousness.

"The occult order of the Magi vouchsafes but little instruction to its devotees, once the contents of the papyri having been mastered by the latter, and then only in answer to a direct request. Too often a superabundance of instruction is bestowed upon novitiates, and with the result that the human soul is not left sufficiently alone to choose for itself the food best adapted to its growth. Priest, minister, rabbi, philosopher, theosophist, reformer—all these place the soul in a state of siege. By constant and untiring efforts to force upon it their own religious beliefs and dogmas, they virtually deprive it of its liberty to beget native thought. Thus sated with the spiritual pabulum supplied in the recipes and formulæ of those whose idiosyncrasies and needs are different from its own, the soul is crippled, its growth is stunted, its destiny falls short of what might otherwise have been its goal.

"The only good office which one soul can bestow upon another is to place before it the spiritual food which has proved most beneficial to itself, leaving it entire liberty to partake or not of this sustenance after being submitted to the test of its own moral, mental, and religious convictions. No two souls are alike, any more than are two bodies; nor can they relish exactly the same description of food. Novitiates, being endowed with a goodly intellect, should read any book they may prefer, if only they contain sound moral, religious, or metaphysical doctrines, and out of these they should select the food which they honestly believe most suitable to foster their spiritual growth. But the soul is too often bewildered on finding itself in a labyrinth of precepts, maxims, creeds, and systems of such varied nature—though all apparently possessed of merit—that it becomes utterly incapable of selecting the true path. In such cases the soul should earnestly pray unto God for light, and if it be accustomed to prayer, if it have faith, the answer will come from on high. Many prayers, however, do not reach the throne of grace; they rise only in direct proportion with the karma, or spiritual status of the soul, some reaching the aura of earth only, and others ascending into infinite space, in search of the Heavenly Father, as the radiations of the aurora dart upward to the zenith.

"The shrines or tabernacles which it will become thy province to establish, will have solely for aim the keeping of the novices of the order under their holy influence. The sacred objects which thou shalt place therein will give forth auric radiations of such divine power that those coming in contact with them, and being in the proper spirit of faith, will be enlightened when in doubt, comforted in despondency, aided in distress, and consoled in the time of suffering. At the foot of the shrine the devotee will be covered by the aura of the order, and be under its direct protection. If he so wills, and if he have faith, his life will then be passed in harmony with the laws of the Universe; and his soul, guided by the sacred influences emitted from the shrine, will proceed on its upward path, live a life of its own, be an entity of itself, and work out in fullness its own evolution according to the laws of its own physiological conditions. And such is the destiny of every human soul, though few can fulfill it unhampered by extraneous influence. It therefore behooves our order to correct abuses and restore to the human soul its rightful inheritance, the choice of its own process of evolution, of its own pathway to the Heavenly Father.

"And now, dear brother, retire to thy apartment, ponder well over all that has been set before thee; fast and do penance until the morrow at high twelve, when thou wilt again repair to the Sanctuary to

meet Balthazar and Melchior, and be invested with the highest dignity Earth can confer."

The night following this first but remarkable interview with Marius, the body of Gaspar lay in repose on a couch before the shrine in the Sanctuary, but his spirit was traveling afar off. Perceiving a golden light that shone like a sun over the city of Alexandria, in Egypt, he knew that it was the aura of Balthazar. To him he forthwith proceeded, and found him absorbed in deep meditation not unmingled with sadness. His reflections were directed toward the actual unprogressive condition of Egypt and the adjoining countries, all subjugated under the yoke of Islamism. Having notified Balthazar of the meeting set for next day and of its object, he hastened onward on his journey through the psychic realms of space, and reaching India, similarly notified Melchior of the projected meeting. He found this brother Magus also in a dejected mood, for he had just returned from scenes which to him were revolting. A man of note and worth had lately died. A multitude of women carrying new-born babies in their arms were assembled near the funeral pyre, upon which lay the body of the man. Lifting their babes toward the body soon to be consumed, they prayed in an excited manner, some vociferously, that the spirit of the great and good man might be incarnated in their babes.

"And thus," said Melchior aloud, "is interpreted the doctrine of reincarnation. Sad result of ignorance and non-progressive teachings."

While Gaspar was traveling to these far-away countries, Marius lay sleepless upon his couch, mentally reviewing the resumé of the papyri as explained to him by Gaspar. For the first time in his long life of study had he received information of a system of cosmogony that cleared away his doubts, answered satisfactorily all the mental questions he had so often propounded to himself without being able to solve them. The anthropomorphic God was in many points far below his highest ideals, and he felt that his loftiest acts of adoration reached some Deity far transcending the God-man. And now a supreme being had been revealed to him of unspeakable majesty, the divine attributes of whom could even be reached by man if he so willed.

"The man of science," he reflected, "the philosopher to whom thus far gods have been presented with revengeful attributes and arbitrary rulings, gods unworthy to be entertained by his intellect, can no longer say 'My microscope, magnifying one thousand diameters, has yet not found him; my thirty-six-inch telescope, piercing the realms of infinitude to an immeasurable distance, has not yet discovered him;' these men of science and of philosophy, many of whom I know so well, and know to be hon-

est in their convictions, may presently direct their investigations toward the divine lines of force permeating the Universe, and from the Ray of Matter ascend to the Ray of Mind, and with an enlarged comprehension vouchsafed by this Ray, reach out for the Ray of Spirit and discover there the treasures of divine consciousness it contains. This is religion, and the word religion is derived from *religare*, *to bind together anew*, and the system of cosmogony set forth by the papyri is merely one continuous binding together of all the manifestations of the Universe, both material and spiritual, one grand religion culminating in the sublime Spiritual Sun, the positive pole of all that is, Parabrahm, beyond Brahm, beyond the anthropomorphic God.

"How much in accordance with the later discoveries of science are these interferences with the divine lines of force, resulting ultimately in effects perceptible by the senses of man. Indeed, the force called magnetism cannot be imprisoned; its rate of vibration is so infinitely swift that it traverses all substances. Electricity, a force obtained by placing resistances in the magnetic lines, can always be controlled, yea, confined in glass jars, compelled to run into mapped-out or insulated channels, and this for the simple reason that the electric current has a much slower rate of vibration than the magnetic current, its parent. All this is beautifully grand."

Continuing his review of the instructions he had received from the Magus, he dwelt at some length upon the revelations made concerning the occult powers evolved by means of ceremonies, or invocations addressed to certain images of the Catholic church.

"I remember well," he soliloquized, "seeing on a certain day a number of girls dressed in white, with long veils nearly trailing on the ground, and crowns of white flowers on their heads, entering a church. I felt impelled to follow them. A solemn Mass was being celebrated, for this was a festive day, a day appointed for the confirmation of the children. The sermon was preached by a priest whose face bore all the characteristics of the true mystic. In him the senses had been vanquished, and his soul was surely attuned to the harmonies of the Infinite, for as he spoke to the children from his pulpit, invoking the Holy Ghost to descend upon them, to take abode in their young hearts, so innocent and pure, to inspire their actions during life, and to be the safeguard of their faith in God, powerful waves of spiritual odic force issued from his hands and brain, permeating the entire church, and holding the devotees spell-bound. The children kept their sweet eyes riveted on him, and assuredly they received the influx of the Holy Ghost, for undoubtedly that priest was a saint.

"At other times I have entered Catholic churches and found them cold and spirit-

ually empty. I must confess, however, in truth, that before the altar of Sophia, or the Blessed Virgin, as the Catholics would name her, I have always found a certain spiritual atmosphere, and before such images as are called miraculous, at the foot of which the devotee may burn candles, I have never failed to find a powerful divine influx, a strong auxiliary to upward growth."

Twelve strokes on the large bell of the city's cathedral indicated high noon. At the last stroke the door of the Sanctuary before which Marius had arrived opened wide. In prayer at the foot of the shrine Gaspar was kneeling; and now Marius beheld him attired in the vestments of Magus. The consecrated square pieces of cloth of gold, insignia of the sacred office, in the image of which the talismans are made, reposed on his breast and back, and on his head glittered the golden crown. The facial expression of the Magus as he thus knelt in prayer was that of a saint.

Marius advanced a few steps toward a desk, and bent in prayer.

Soon a rumbling as of distant thunder was heard; a blinding flash of lightning shot athwart the Sanctuary, followed by a terrible crash of thunder, and before the shrine, clad in his sacerdotal vestments, stood Balthazar, the Egyptian Magus.

To describe the astonishment of Marius would be impossible. Never had he witnessed any occult phenomena, and had he

not been a brave man, gifted with the true courage derived from deep learning, he would certainly have been greatly frightened. Hardly had he rallied, however, from his bewilderment, when the Sanctuary resounded with the noise of fearful hissings coming from all directions and surrounding Marius. In an instant these hissings materialized into tongues of flame, and later into hideous serpents darting their fiery tongues at him. For one moment the hissing became terrible, and Melchior, the Indian Magus, also vested with the raiments of his sacred office, appeared and stood near the shrine. Thereupon the three Magi united in prayer, after which they clasped hands, and, bringing their foreheads together, thus communed for a moment. This brief communion of their souls being ended, they took their respective seats. Then Gaspar spoke:

"Brethren Magi, in obedience to the last request of my most holy predecessor, made before his translation to a higher sphere of activities, I have come to America, and have endeavored to find the most worthy of Americans. A learned, wise, and religious man is Marius, here present; he has been found worthy and well qualified to enter our most sacred order, and has been selected by me to establish Sanctuaries and make initiations on this great continent of America. The establishment of Sanctuaries here has been found necessary to lead to the true

upward path innumerable souls who are eagerly searching for spiritual light, who are earnest in their endeavors, honest at heart, and are reaching out for the highest, ceaselessly grasping at every straw with spirit glitter that chances to drift before their mental vision.

"It is high time that temples should be opened, neophytes initiated, and true spiritual food placed before the hungry souls. No one is better qualified, in my estimation, than Marius, to enter upon the duties of the sacred office, and for your approval, dear brethren Magi, do I now present him."

While Gaspar was speaking, the eyes of the other Magi were directed upon Marius, or rather their inner vision, for he felt their searching glance penetrate every recess of his brain, as if trying to reconnoiter the worth of every cell.

"Our brother is worthy and well qualified," they responded in unison; "let him be anointed."

"Let his name be Balthazar," exclaimed the Egyptian Magus.

"Rather let it be Melchior," remarked the Magus from India.

"Egypt and the neighboring countries over which my ministrations extend," replied Balthazar, "are overwhelmed by the suppressive yoke of Islamism. No progress is desired by my people, hence no progress is possible. Intellectual attainments are ignored by them, and even the manifesta-

tion of our occult powers, however developed at times, can hardly arouse them momentarily from their spiritual lethargy. No longer can my stay in these countries be of benefit to the people, and, therefore, I would retire to my home above and join my predecessors now awaiting my coming."

Melchior then took the word and said:

"My longer abode in India is also fruitless. Real occult phenomena and most bare-faced frauds are being exhibited side by side in our public streets. The vast occult powers produced in our temples have degenerated into mere magical performances, awe-inspiring, it is true, but the value of which, for spiritual enhancement, is absolutely naught. The scientist covers us with scorn, unable as we are to base the facts we produce upon any known law. Our old dogmas are being desecrated by vulgar abuses—the dogmas of reincarnation for instance—and naught can I do to reform these abuses; ignorance reigns supreme. To my home above do I long to go, Marius being my successor."

"With due respect for my brethren," interposed Gaspar, "I desire to make a suggestion in the interest of the order, which we all have at heart. I would call thy attention, O Melchior, to the fact that the eyes of the world seeking for light are now turned toward India in search of occult truths, and as a preliminary thereto, are looking for genuine manifestations of occult

powers. These, Melchior, thou canst vouchsafe to them when the proper time shall arrive. Earnest, honest men of learning and science will repair to thy country, confident that the wonders of occultism, if found to be true, must rest upon law, and that law they are bent upon discovering. Science and philosophy will be the great spiritualizers of the future; wonder-workers will be made subservient to them.

"Balthazar estimates truly the present condition of hopelessness, spiritual hopelessness, which holds his country in bondage. For years he has realized this, and his ceaseless longing for his celestial home has well-nigh paralyzed his efforts at rescue. These, however, he knows only too well would prove of no avail in the present cycle of time — Balthazar's successor Marius should be. This, brethren, is my suggestion."

Melchior instinctively understood the wisdom of the counsel volunteered by Gaspar, and willingly gave his assent thereto. He knew, moreover, that both of them could not retire, for there can be no less than three Magi to constitute lawfully the order, wherever their abode may be.

Presently Marius was invited to kneel on the steps leading to the shrine; Gaspar standing on his right, Melchior on his left, and Balthazar behind him. The latter took the square of gold cloth resting upon his own breast, and placed it upon the head of

Marius, the insignia of the office of Magus, being thereby made to unite them.

While thus bound together by the most sacred tie, a hymn was sung by an unseen choir. Gaspar, assisted by Melchior, then took the censer which had been kindled with the mystic fire that ever burns before a shrine, and pouring on the glowing embers a small spoonful of sweet-scented gum, proceeded to swing it around the united brethren, Melchior upholding the golden mantle of Gaspar, thus giving the latter precedence.

The fumes soon surrounded both, and their fragrance at first seemed to have an intoxicating effect upon Marius, gradually, however, opening his brain to the comprehension of things celestial. No longer did he see with his natural eyes, for the psychic world, the soul world, seemed to have opened its spiritual realms to his interior vision.

Balthazar then proceeded to anoint the forehead, eyes, ears, tongue, hands, and feet of Marius, commanding him to use all these senses for the furtherance of the interest only of the souls of man.

All the ceremonies which took place during Gaspar's consecration in London were repeated at the dedication of Marius, the celestial choir lending its soul-entrancing harmonies to the sacred proceedings.

And now Balthazar began to disrobe himself and place the sacred vestments on Marius, at the same time explaining the

occult significance of each. While he was adjusting over his head the cords uniting the two squares of gold cloth, the censer was swung high toward Marius, and the celestial choir sung a hymn of exultation, the vibrations of which endowed his brain-cells with superior spirit-illumination and understanding. For now Marius was a Magus. The name of Balthazar was given him to bear forever.

Handing to his successor a scroll of papyri, Balthazar added:

"These documents have reference to the occult powers possessed by the Magus of Egypt. In them are given in detail the rules to be scrupulously observed for the production of these phenomena. Do thou make use of them with wisdom, and for the greatest benefit of humanity."

The ceremonies terminated, Melchior and Balthazar departed amid their habitual terrorizing occult manifestations. Before taking final leave, however, Balthazar, with indications of tenderest affection, embraced his brethren, saying that they would meet again on high, after their earthly mission would also be fulfilled. Then, in last words, Balthazar said:

"To the crypt of our holy temple in Egypt I will now return, there to prostrate myself before the sacred fire of the order, and slowly be absorbed by it. Farewell, brethren."

Then, turning toward Marius:

"Upon thee, Balthazar, my successor, I bestow my last blessing. May thy career be the source of everlasting good. Upon science, allied with faith in the powers that be, now rests the redemption of poor, benighted humanity. Again, fare thee well."

"Amen," responded in unison a chorus of unseen voices.

A terrible crash of thunder marked the departure of Balthazar.

When Gaspar once more was alone with Marius, now Magus Balthazar, these were his last words:

"Before my departure for my home in Europe, where lies the field of my future activities, I would fain impart to thee my last views upon the work that now lies before thee. It is to be of momentous importance, and is destined to bring to pass events that will result in religious and social reforms, the vast influence of which no one can at present realize; reforms leading toward the harmonization of man's spiritual nature with his earthly needs, without which no contentment or real progress is possible here below.

"In the first place, we must recover our religious inheritance; to the Catholic church we must go and claim our rights. At the feet of the Virgin of the World, Sophia, the divine consciousness, must we assert our privileges, and of her we must ask counsel, advice, and help—for help will surely be granted.

"Let the would-be neophyte kneel before her image, burn a candle in her name, ask that its flame may convey his prayer to the first radiation of her divine consciousness. Thus may occult guidance be bestowed, and when the mystic word shall be given to him by Sophia, when it shall be brought to his consciousness by her, then mayest thou consider his claim to discipleship.

"His admission even to the lowest rank of the order must be earned, for he must be able to receive the 'Word' in the occult way—the only way it may be imparted. Sophia it was who permitted initiation in ancient times, by vouchsafing to the devoted applicant the sacred password, proving him to be overshadowed by the divine consciousness. To-day, this same password must again be received at the foot of Sophia, and the renewed promise given to the order is, that it will be given by her to any applicant found worthy and well qualified.

"Hence, the first period of thy ministration will be with Roman Catholicism. From it we must wrench our rightful belongings. Moreover, it is promised that out of its ranks will arise some of our most devoted adherents.

"Toward the eve of this day I will conduct thee to a place where assemble three priests, as yet belonging (in form only, however,) to the Roman Catholic hierarchy. In them abides the Spirit of God and of true reform, and with them shalt thou labor;

thou must help them to bring to pass the realization of their cherished humanitarian and religious ideals.

"Meanwhile, in degree as the spirit of the order shall move thee, at the proper time and place thou shalt consecrate sanctuaries, and there will I be with thee."

When the dusk of eve overspread the city, Gaspar and Balthazar repaired to the Sanctuary, and, after prayer, took their seats. Having joined hands, Gaspar bade his companion follow him. In a moment they beheld the three priests again assembled in council.

"With these men lies thy present work," said Gaspar. "Now that thou art *en rapport* with them, study them well; this done, pay them a personal visit, during which a complete harmony will be established among you. Thy intuitions will guide thee in thy further intercourse with them."

Having returned from their psychic visit to the priests, Gaspar communed an instant with Balthazar, and in parting words the former exclaimed:

"To thee is entrusted the most momentous mission that can be confided to man. Upon thy shoulders rests the task of bringing a ray of light into the heart of the honest materialist, of instilling into his soul the hope that his noble efforts, his disinterested endeavors toward the advancement of human attainments, the aggrandizement of man's intellectual faculties,

culminating in the enhancement of all that is noble and true and grand in him, may be continued in another sphere of higher activities, when his body has been 'planted,' as he now designates death, this single word, with the sad irony it conveys, indicating the loss of all hope in immortality, or even future life.

"Beside this great task entrusted to thee lies the one, not less in importance, of restoring to our order its religious privileges, its rightful belongings, used and abused during so long a period by the Catholic church of Rome. There wilt thou lay the foundation of the great final religion of humanity, the religion of science, or the science of religion.

"And now again, Balthazar, fare thee well, and may the Spirit of Parabrahm overshadow thee forevermore."

"Amen," answered in unison the unseen choir.

[The more than interesting career of our American Magus Balthazar will be followed in another volume.]

THE END.

EPILOGUE.

AMONGST the readers of "On the Heights of Himalay," while a few will wonder why the present work, which is designated as the sequel to that volume, does not follow the career of many of the actors playing rôles therein, the greater number, caring only for instruction and understanding in the domain of the occult, will congratulate themselves on having been saved from wandering through love stories and other incidents, however interesting they may prove.

Most of the periodicals which have honored "On the Heights" with a review, have expressed regret that it did not confine itself to the elucidation of occult themes, which they are pleased to state was done in a clear and comprehensible manner. Such regret has been strongly formulated in the following article from the *New York Critic*, which we reprint.

This suggestion has been obeyed in the present book, hence the author's excuse for having omitted to follow the career of Trouvère, Olga, the Queen, and others, which may perhaps be done in a subsequent work.

[From the *New York Critic.*]

"On the Heights of Himalay," by A. Van der Naillen, is a book of which it is difficult to speak to

one's satisfaction. While in form a romance, it should not be regarded from that standpoint alone. The story, to be sure, is inconsiderable, save as it serves for the illustration of occult forces. *Its fault is in its continuance when that service is over.* The tale is pure in tone, however, and its language and style are such as to satisfy the demands of good taste. The serious purpose of the author is to present the cosmogony of the theosophist in such elemental form and with such perspicuity that it may be understood by minds unused to abstract thinking. The success with which this has been accomplished merits the highest admiration. We recall, indeed, no book in which notions so difficult of apprehension by the average reader are more clearly presented or rendered more palatable than in the chapters devoted to the primitive doctrines of Parabrahm. It must not be assumed from this that the book is merely a first lesson in Buddhism, or even that it concerns itself with that subject solely; upon other themes that currently interest thinking people the author speaks with the same lucidity. The education of women, the philosophic basis of communism, and many questions of physical and psychic science, are thus elucidated. In fine, one cannot pick up this book or lay it down without feeling that it is the work of an honest and clear-minded man, who knows whereof he writes.

APPENDIX.

CONSOLING, indeed, is the fact that in measure as physiological science progresses, its discoveries ever corroborate the knowledge possessed for centuries past by the order of the Magi.

The microscopical investigations into the cellular system of man, and especially into the brain-cells, made recently by such eminent men as Van Beneden, Haidenhain, Flemming, Gustav Eisen of California, and others, have revealed elements in them hitherto unknown, elements of great importance to the world.

Before long the man of learning will be enabled to understand the pretensions of the occultist, namely, that occult laws are based on fact, and that their foundation may be discovered by physiological science, as instruments of greater magnifying power are gradually produced, permitting deeper investigation into the realm of the infinite and of the infinitesimal. Moreover, in proportion as these pretensions become substantiated, it will appear more legitimate to take into serious consideration the claims of the seer in regard to the activities, as yet occult, of the different parts of man's body, of the innumerable cells composing it, and mainly of the brain-cells, the functions of

which it is most important that progressive man should now understand.

We will state here that the natural size of a brain-cell, as illustrated, is about $\frac{1}{2600}$ of an inch, or smaller than the impress made by the point of the finest needle. To such wonderful developments has microscopical science arrived, as will be related presently.

The statements of pure science in regard to the quality and functions of cells are as follows:

Microscopists have found that every cell, vegetable as well as animal, contains two main parts entirely distinct, which stand towards each other in a kind of symbiosis, for mutual aid, advantage, and protection. These parts may be designated as the cell proper and the nucleus, the latter entirely enclosed in and surrounded by the former.

The main constituents of the cell were believed, until lately, to be the cytoplasm (Fig. 1-a) and the nucleus, or caryosome. More recent microscopical investigation has discovered that the nucleus itself contains at least three different and distinct parts; these are the two kinds of chromosomes, so called because they respond to the basic and acid stains applied by the microscopist, and the "linine threads," or filaments. There are also some two or more elements in the nucleus which microscopists are now separating optically and

chemically. However, the chromosomic elements are the most important.

In addition to the above two elements of the cell proper, modern science has discovered in its cytoplasm a new, distinct, and most important element, the "Centrosome, or Centrosomes." These again are surrounded by a sphere of peculiar matter known as the Archoplasm.

When a cell is at rest, the archoplasm and its centrosomes are seemingly united in one body, situated near, but not in, the center of the cell. (See Fig. 1.) Shortly before the cell begins to multiply, which it does by dividing itself into two distinct cells, the centrosome, being the real life-giving or life-directing organ of the cell, shows an unusual activity; it increases by budding, and becomes double. (Fig. 2.) The newly-formed or second centrosome soon begins to move quickly around the side of the nucleus (Fig.3), carrying with it its own share of archoplasm and filaments, and finally lands at the opposite pole of the nucleus. (Fig. 4.)

Thus we have in the cytoplasm a nucleus with two centrosomes, one at each of its opposite poles.

Presently a very important transformation takes place in the cell. The centrosomes cause the nucleus to be enveloped or surrounded by a spindle of archoplasmic rays projected from the two centrosomic poles. (Fig. 5.) These rays or filaments

press initially upon the membrane surrounding the nucleus; later on they dissolve the same, after which they push the chromosomes of the nucleus together, pressing them in one equatorial band across the entire nucleus. (Fig. 5.) Later yet the archoplasmic rays divide or push the chromosomes apart in such a way that the rays from the south pole drive one-half of the chromosomes toward the north, while the rays emanating from the northern archoplasm send the other half of the chromosomes into the southern portion of the nucleus. (Fig. 6.)

After the chromosomes have thus separated into two equal parts, a new membrane is formed around each part or zone of chromosomes, thereby creating an additional nucleus (Fig. 7), while the membrane around the original cell contracts in the equatorial plane, dividing the cell in two (Figs. 8, 9), each new cell enclosing one-half of the original nucleus. We thus become possessed of two cells instead of one.

The work of this multiplication of cells is done and directed by the centrosomes, the archoplasmic rays or filaments being the instruments accomplishing said wonderful transformation. The centrosomes, moreover, are believed by the microscopists to be the organs of the hereditary transmission of all idiosyncrasies, proclivities, and propensities characterizing the parents.

Physiological science having thus spoken and laid open to us its valuable discoveries up to the present time, occult science will now step in and continue the important work.

The microscopist, in his achievements previously described, has ascertained that the chromosomes filling the nucleus are also endowed with linine threads, but these, as yet, appear very dim in the instruments of to-day. The occultist, however, knows that the chromosomes of the nucleus and their filaments have functions similar to those of the centrosomes and their linine threads, the former acting upon the nucleolus in the same manner as the latter act upon the nucleus, and also causing the multiplication by division of the nucleolus. Furthermore, amongst the intranucleolar bodies is found to exist an infinitesimal speck of semi-matter and semi-spirit, constituting in reality a spiritplasm around which spirit aura first concretes itself into a brilliant little star. This infinitesimal star is the initial point of contact between man and the Spirit of the Universe, of which he may now partake and make his own in degree as he keeps his higher self in affinity with it. Thus on the side of a glass retort filled with watery vapor a single drop of liquid is formed at first by condensation of the vapor; this drop, however, steadily enlarges as, by affinity, it gathers more vapor into itself.

The growth of the animal body of man, and, in fact, of any other body, animal or vegetable, takes place through the multiplication of cells. The process originates, as we have seen, in the centrosomes situated in the cytoplasmic region, which is the region of animal instincts; there it acts upon the nucleus—the seat of the intellect—which is much disturbed by the linine threads while they carry minute particles of said nucleus into the opposite polar region of the cell. The action of these occult forces is well illustrated by the growth of a child, in whose steadily developing body the multiplication of cells is most rapid. There we find the animal propensities to reign almost supreme, holding sway over the incipient and struggling intellect. Later on in life, when cells multiply less rapidly, the nucleus being more at peace, the intellect steadily improves, while in mature age, when the cell now undisturbed is given the opportunity to ripen, the intellect may attain a higher development.

The nucleolus is the seat of superior intellection, of the higher philosophical attainments; and the intranucleolar bodies are the abode of transcendent religious idealism.

The infinitesimal luminous speck of spiritplasm amongst the intranucleolar bodies, as before stated, is the matrix of spirit, the link between mind and soul, the human and the divine, man and his GOD, the Adept and Parabrahm.

When man has attained to that state of development where he has overcome his animal nature, has acquired intellection in the degree vouchsafed by a refined nucleus and nucleolus, and has surrounded the intranucleolar bodies by esthetic and sound religious idealism, then the spiritplasm is ready to assume its divine function. One vivid aspiration toward the Infinite, one earnest prayer addressed to the Supreme Being, one humble supplication to the Higher Powers that rule the Universe, for more light upon the mysterious destiny of all that is, will vivify and bring to active life the spiritplasm of the cell, consecrating it with pure spirit, the hallowed concretion of the aura of Parabrahm.

Thus takes place the spirit birth of the cell, the initial act assuring the immortality of man. The spiritplasm once vivified through divine radiance becomes the guiding star of the cell. With the aid of appropriate practices of a pure and religious life, it grows in quality and brightness, soon to rule over the intellect by spiritualizing its organs—the nucleus and nucleolus—causing their expansion, and consequent contraction of the cytoplasmic area, the region where all animal propensities of man originate.

This spiritualizing of the cell takes place through a physical process similar to the one in operation during the division of the cell, but working inversely. The linine

threads in this case receive their energy from the spiritplasm, then influence the nucleolus and nucleus in turn, the outer membrane of which they expand by the constant pressure they exert upon it. This forces it to impinge upon the cytoplasm, compress it into a smaller volume, eventually bringing forth the evolution of the cell instead of its division, the latter being the case when the vivifying energy originates in the cytoplasm.

Thus it is seen that the spiritual growth of man, the unfolding of his higher self, is not wrought by miracle, but is primarily a process of nature, of physical evolution terminating in, and finally merging into, the psychic realm. Then the battle of the angel against the animal in us is nearly won, and will henceforth resume itself in a succession of skirmishes, severe at times, but holding forth the promise of final victory.

In our dissertation upon human cells, we have confined ourselves to the consideration of those only which are entrusted with the working out of the higher functions of the brain of man.

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